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The history of the Sisters
of Providence of Saint Mary
-of-the-Wood, Ind.

SAINTE MARIE DE LA FORET

SISTÈRE DE LA PROVIDENCE

1879



HISTORY OF THE

OF
SAINT MARY-OF-THE-WOODS
BY
SISTER EUGENIA LOGAN, S.P.

VOLUME II

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The History of the Sisters of Providence
of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana

Volume II (1856-1894)

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Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana

The History of
The Sisters of Providence
of
Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana

Volume II (1856-1894)

by

Sister Eugenia Logan, S.P., M.A.

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1978

DEDICATION

*To the Memory of Mother Theodore Guerin
and Her Successors in Office
Past, Present, and Future*

IDENTIFICATION FROM CENTER CIRCLE

1. Mother Theodore Guerin (1840-1856)
2. Mother Mary Cecilia Bailly (1856-1868)
3. Mother Anastasie Brown (1868-1874)
4. Mother Mary Ephrem Glenn (1874-1883)
5. Mother Eurphrasie Hinkle (1883-1889)
6. Mother Mary Cleophas Foley (1890-1926)
7. Mother Mary Raphael Slattery (1926-1938)
8. Mother Mary Bernard Laughlin (1938-1948)
9. Mother Marie Helene Franey (1949-1953)
10. Mother Gertrude Clare Owens (1954-1960)
11. Mother Rose Angela Horan (1960-1966)
12. Mother Mary Pius Regnier (1966-1976)
13. Mother Loretta Schafer (1976—)

THE SUPERIORS-GENERAL OF THE
SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE 1840—



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The prayers and good wishes of the Sisters of Providence have followed the progress of this volume. To them, and to all the generous contributors listed above, the writer is extremely grateful.

PREFACE

In 1958, the writer was appointed by the late Mother Gertrude Clare Owens to continue the history of the Community and eventually to complete a second volume. The older historians had envisioned the work as continuing from the death of Mother Theodore to the present era, but so much has happened since that far-off day in 1856, that extending the volume into the present day, or even up to the Centenary Year 1956, would produce a volume as large as the first one and too heavy, and too complex, for the impatient readers of today. It seemed wiser to limit the scope of the work to the forty years between the death of Mother Theodore and the opening years of Mother Mary Cleophas' administration.

From the foundation in 1840 until 1875 the firm but well-meant order of the Bishop of Vincennes confined the Sisters of Providence to treading the hills and vales of Indiana. It prevented them from accepting schools in which to exercise their ministry of teaching outside Indiana despite the many invitations to move into other fields. As a consequence, the Sisters could not demonstrate the beauty of their religious life to new recruits any place else than in Indiana. As soon as Bishop de Saint-Palais removed the restriction, the Community was invigorated by postulants from Michigan and Illinois, and the Sisters profited by new contacts. Older and more experienced Sisters were local superiors for some years, but as soon as new novices were admitted, their qualities of leadership were recognized and utilized.

Expansion and development went forth together. New ventures were begun. Some were successful, and some were failures the Sisters thought; but they were not so in the long run. They were all brave attempts with one motivation: the glory of God and the extension of His kingdom.

A point which needed to be discussed was the resentment shown by Mother Mary Cecilia at the unexpected changes which took place under other hands than hers. The danger of her causing a break in the Community was not an imaginary danger. The writer hopes to present an honest interpretation of the painful episode which oral tradition has somewhat misrepresented, and which was not thoroughly discussed in biographies touching upon the subject. She hopes the truth will not

place in a false light the reputation of an intrepid person whose character had the faults as well as the virtues of her personality.

The pages devoted to Providence Hospital may trouble a few readers as being too detailed, but they were made so only because some of the present-day Sisters and many of our Terre Haute friends are hearing about the hospital for the first time. No one entering the Community after 1908 has ever seen the original building. After its failure as a hospital, it was sold to the diocese for use as an orphanage. In 1908, it was severely damaged by fire, and rebuilt by the diocese as neatly as an old building could be put together, but never in its former elegance.

The facts given are substantiated from Community annals and records of important events and the available sources noted in the bibliography. They are supplemented by reminiscences of the Sisters who lived in the building during one or both of its careers. A photograph, from the SMW Archives collection, taken while the building was used as an orphanage, is reproduced in this volume. It verifies the description even to the lintel over the main door with the name "Providence Hospital."

In 1919 the orphanage closed. The orphans were transferred to the care of the Good Shepherd Sisters in Indianapolis. The Sisters of Providence lived in the old building and taught the children from the area around St. Ann's, Terre Haute, until the parish was established, and a convent was ready. The old orphanage building was eventually sold, and later demolished.

In conclusion, the writer notes throughout the annals and the careful records of these forty years, the presence of the abiding spirit of loving sisterliness transmitted by Mother Theodore. The diarist and historian could state facts without condemnation of those who caused anxiety and heartache, and doing all possible to remedy mistakes. The Sisters preserved their union of prayer and action, "forgiving one another with their whole hearts."

S.E.L.

INTRODUCTION

*"I Sleep, but My Heart Watches over
This House Which I Have Founded."*

This inscription on the cross marking Mother Theodore's grave in the convent cemetery at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods is freighted with meaning for her daughters, the Sisters of Providence. Adapted by loving and grief-stricken religious women, these words, ascribed to her in death, forge a personal bond between that Mother and each succeeding generation of daughters. It bespeaks to each one a personal interest in her spiritual and professional formation as a Sister of Providence and Daughter of the Church.

During recent years the swift acceleration of change in society, the Church, and in most religious Congregations, including our own, filled many with apprehension that we were moving forward with a velocity we could no longer control. True, the future is not certain nor is the direction of the course we are charting clear. The future was not clear to Mother Theodore when she consented to lead the tiny group of religious women to America. The reality of the situation: the dire poverty of the early years, the seeming inadequacy of the location for their apostolate of education, the years of misunderstanding with her Bishop, and the intense struggle to survive as a religious Congregation in the remote Indiana forest clouded her vision even more.

This second volume of the history of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods covers the administrations of Mother Theodore's first four successors: Mother Mary Cecilia Bailly, Mother Anastasie Brown, Mother Mary Ephrem Glenn, and Mother Euphrasie Hinkle — a period of over forty years. The author, with candor and honesty, with true literary skill and clarity of expression, presents each administration with its joys and sorrows, its successes and sometimes insurmountable problems, all convincing the reader that Mother Theodore's successors had no clearcut path created for them either. The burning love of the Foundress for Christ, her boundless enthusiasm for furthering the Kingdom, her superb qualities of leadership, her busi-

ness acumen which won the respect of all, her proven reputation as an excellent teacher, and her warm human qualities which enabled her to establish firm rapport with old and young, rich and poor, clergy and lay friends alike — all these made her “shoes” difficult to fill. However, each valiant successor in office and each succeeding generation of Sisters of Providence brought unique gifts to the young Congregation; each administration had to encounter much the same agony of uncertainty and financial insecurity, of human frailty and misunderstanding of one form or another as did Mother Theodore and her companions. Each generation of religious will continue to plow courageously through the unknown, finding comfort and confidence in the knowledge that from Heaven Mother Theodore watches lovingly “over this house which I have formed.” Each Sister, whatever her task may be in furthering the work of the Kingdom, will find strength and inspiration in the rich spiritual legacy of our Foundress and her successors: a burning love for Christ, a profound appreciation for the Eucharistic Sacrifice — so deep that His Presence will enable her to cope with any hardship, a constant reliance on the Holy Spirit for guidance, a tender devotion to the Mother of Christ, and an intense love for the Church whose every need must be her personal concern.

A careful study of these chapters will enable the reader to see how the apostolic work of the Community was shaped in the latter part of the nineteenth century by the needs of the Church and by the social movements in Indiana during this period. Though education was the predominant service rendered by the Congregation, emergency situations calling for new ventures found the Sisters of Providence ready and willing to meet them. Throughout the administrations of Mother Theodore and her successors “Saint Mary-of-the-Woods was the central point at which priests, missionaries, and friends converged. Other communities made permanent foundations in Indiana about the time of her death in 1856, and somewhat later than that, but Saint Mary-of-the-Woods remained the center of influence and culture.” (Chapter I, p. 6) With Saint Mary’s as the central point or crossroad at which clergy and hierarchy, educators, parents, and interested friends of

humble or learned professions found warm hospitality and an opportunity to relax for a period of time in its quiet woodland atmosphere, one is not surprised that a very high caliber of education was maintained, that schools were accepted, and often regretfully refused, from coast to coast, that students for the Academy and vocations to the Community were encouraged by friends from areas well beyond the Indiana boundaries, and also that support in joy and sorrow was forthcoming from clergy, friends, and alumnae across the country when the occasion warranted.

My only regret in reading these pages is that so much must remain unsaid of the wonderful women who formed the Congregation membership at the time, of the sterling qualities and innumerable contributions of genuine interest and concern of the clergy and lay friends who helped to guide and mold the affairs of the Congregation, and of the thousands of students who attended schools staffed by the Sisters of Providence during the period from 1856 to approximately 1900. Words would be inadequate and the size of the book unwieldy. It is comforting to reflect that in the Book of Eternity an account of each of these persons is written with total adequacy and accuracy by a loving God who knows all things.

Sister Ann Kathleen Brawley
February 23, 1978

CHAPTER I

A Glance Before and After

Almost sixteen years had passed since 1840 when a group of six Sisters of Providence of Ruillé-sur-Loir had come in answer to the invitation of the Bishop of Vincennes to open a motherhouse and schools in his diocese. October 22, 1840, a day ever memorable as Foundation Day to the Sisters of Providence, marked their first entry into a densely wooded region seventy-two miles north of Vincennes, then the episcopal see. The group consisted of Mother Theodore Guérin, the superior, Sister St. Vincent Gagé, Sister Basilide Sénéchal, Sister Mary Xavier Lerée, Sister St. Liguori Tiercin, and Sister Olympiade Boyer. Their ocean crossing had been a long one and a stormy one as well, and the parting with their beloved France painful. The primitive methods of travel by stagecoach and river boat were enough to dismay stout hearts, but the Sisters were missionaries and had cheerfully embraced the hardship and exile that were to be their portion.

The little Congregation from which they sprang had been begun in 1806 by a few pious women under the leadership of Père Jacques François Dujarié. Its purpose, like that of other religious groups, was to reclaim the children whose religious education had been neglected during the French Revolution and the Napoleonic era. The problem was to bring back the knowledge of the faith to a whole generation which had been exposed to unbelief and cynicism. The teaching of children and care of the sick poor in the homes were the simple means these dedicated women used to promote their good work.

At first the association was governed very simply by directives from Père Dujarié; but that arrangement could not continue very long if any permanence were to be secured. When more and more interested girls and young women were attracted to the society, Père Dujarié looked about for some woman who had the necessary skill and piety to act as superior-general. His choice, in 1820, fell upon Countess Zoé du Roscöt, in religion Mère Marie-Madeleine, a noblewoman who combined the qualities he sought in an eminent degree. At once she drew up exact regulations for the management of the small schools then under the care of the Sisters of Providence. By visiting each of these estab-

lishments, she succeeded in creating a spirit of uniformity in prayer, work, and spirit in both convents and schools.¹

Hardly had she finished her foundation work when Mère Marie-Madeleine succumbed to typhoid fever. Père Dujarié, shocked at her death, did not lose his confidence in God, and appointed Aimée Lecor, who then bore the name of Soeur Cécile, as Mère Marie-Madeleine's successor. Seeing her overcome with fear and very mindful of her own deficiencies, he placed her under the care of Our Lady, changing her name to Mère Marie.

His choice was a wise one. Her strong character and deeply religious nature very soon made her influence felt. Considered as really a foundress, since preliminary work was only begun, Mère Marie, or Mother Mary, as her American daughters called her, was given the privilege of a foundress and governed her Community for fifty years. Under her care, the Congregation developed. Her association with Père Dujarié is well analyzed in Catta-Heston, *Father Dujarié*.²

The Bishop of Vincennes Appeals for Sisters

When Bishop Celestine de la Hailandière, the successor of Bishop Simon Gabriel Bruté in the see of Vincennes, appealed to the Sisters of Providence in 1839 for Sisters, Mère Marie at first thought she would have to refuse. The Ruillé Community had not been formed for foreign missionary work, and the training of the Sisters had been for diocesan schools and academies in France. Not to defeat the Will of God, if the request were a manifestation of it, Mère Marie and Mgr. Jean-Baptiste Bouvier, the Bishop of Le Mans, laid the matter before the Sisters in the annual retreat of 1839.

There were a number of volunteers, really more than necessary, since it was thought that only five or six could be spared, but there was no applicant who presented the necessary qualities for leading the group. Mère Marie, in authority from 1822 on, had received all the Sisters of the American foundation on their entrance into religion and she knew them well. Quite definitely in Mère Marie's mind, and also in Bishop Bouvier's, was the conviction that the American foundation should be a separate motherhouse, self-governing and self-supporting, united to Ruillé only by ties of charity and filial affection.³ No financial help could be given it, only enough to provide the Sisters with what clothing and equipment they could take with them. But still no leader!

Mère Marie turned to Soeur St. Théodore, formerly Anne Thérèse

Guérin, a gifted Sister who had entered the Community in 1823, and who had served in positions of responsibility from the beginning of her religious life. Her precarious health, caused by a too strong remedy administered during illness and the consequent ruining of her digestion, held her back from volunteering. She was convinced that she would be more of a liability than an asset to any missionary venture. Mère Marie saw her as the one person who could make the foundation and spoke to her about it, saying that she felt she could be successful in America. If she did not feel she could go, the project would have to be given up. Soeur St. Théodore reflected and prayed, and feeling that the opinion of her superior was an indication of God's Will for her, she accepted the obedience on August 25, 1839.

The band was not to go until the summer of 1840, and nothing further was said about the venture; neither did the chosen leader know until June, 1840, who were to be her companions. Soeur St. Théodore had been warned by her physician that her health would not withstand the rigors of the American climate; but she had accepted the obedience, and there was no alteration on her part.

The details of the foundation have been well set forth in the first volume of the *History of the Sisters of Providence*, by Sister Mary Borromeo Brown, and in the *Life and Life Work of Mother Theodore Guérin*, by Sister Mary Theodosia Mug. Only a brief synopsis should be given here.

There were many hardships awaiting the six foundresses: the vastness of the country was in itself terrifying; the difficulty of beginning and carrying on a school in a language of which they knew very little; but above all, the ensuing trials of determining their status in the new locale.

The country became more homelike, and the English speech was soon acquired, but there remained trials of the spiritual order which had been totally unexpected. The years 1840 to 1847 have been characterized in the Community annals as "the years of our sorrows," because they represented a long and painful struggle for temporal and spiritual solidarity. Misunderstandings with the Bishop of Vincennes who failed to see any need for giving them land on which to build their motherhouse caused the Sisters perpetual anxiety lest they might be asked to leave the diocese. The perplexing refusal to approve the Constitutions and Rules, and convert the Community from French to American diocesan status, left Mother Theodore and her assistants

unable to proceed with assurance on the work undertaken in Indiana. The trials of these years are explained in the first volume, substantiated by letters and documents.

Bishop Bouvier and Mother Mary tried to help with cautious advice, but neither one was in a position to help in a financial way. The Congregation at Ruillé had no subjects to send to supplement the members of the group, and there were times when the Sisters felt lost and abandoned in their forest. Only the firm faith of Mother Theodore Guérin, and her confidence that God had called them to the lonely spot, united the group in its resolution to stay.

Finally, after a critical period in which Mother Theodore suffered very much from misrepresentation and misunderstanding in her relations with the episcopal authority, conditions began to improve with the resignation of Bishop de la Hailandière and the appointment of a new bishop, the Right Reverend John Stephen Bazin. The latter remained in office less than a year, but in the designs of God, he brought peace to the Sisters of Providence by approving their Rules, promising to be a father to them, and deeding to them seventy-nine acres on which they could found their motherhouse in security.

Under the fourth Bishop of Vincennes, Right Reverend Maurice de Saint-Palais, and the fifth, Right Reverend Francis Silas Chatard, the work of the Congregation progressed. In addition to St. Mary's Institute, incorporated in 1846 for the higher education of women, the Sisters opened fourteen establishments in Indiana, two of them orphan asylums. The death of Mother Theodore in 1856 left her Community well-founded, with the Sisters united in a spirit of charity which was the admiration of all who came in contact with them. Hardships still remained, but justified in their secure trust in God, the Sisters continued the good work Mother Theodore and the foundresses had begun.

A glance into the years following Mother Theodore's death will reveal many persons whose names were made familiar in the first volume. Some Sisters have unthinkingly applied the term "co-Foundresses" to the two Le Fer sisters, Sister St. Francis Xavier and Sister Mary Joseph, whose services were invaluable. But they cannot share the title, belonging as it does, to the original six. Sister St. Francis Xavier had entered the Congregation at Ruillé in December, 1839, to try her vocation there, but with the understanding that she was to proceed to America after completing her novitiate. Bishop Bouvier permitted her to take her final vows before leaving for America, so

1. convinced was he of her missionary vocation. She arrived at St.
d Mary-of-the-Woods in November, 1841, and as Mistress of Novices
2. and second assistant, was a most devoted ally and support to Mother
e Theodore. Her frail health was never a measure of the inflexible spirit
e of loyalty which she entertained for Mother Theodore in "the years of
t our sorrows." Sister Mary Joseph, Elvire le Fer de la Motte, her sister,
1. came to St. Mary-of-the-Woods as a secular in 1852, twelve years after
1. the foundation, to begin her postulancy and novitiate in Indiana. As
1. Mistress of Novices, her strong religious character, almost austere in
1. its intensity, placed in the hearts of her novices a deep piety and a
1. generous devotion. For twenty-nine years she remained in office, first
1. as Mistress, and later as assistant, but she was destined to have only the
1. first four years with Sister St. Francis. Mother Theodore's loyal
1. assistant died in January, 1856, preceding Mother's demise by about
1. four months. Sister St. Francis, who had always seemed powerful with
1. God in obtaining Mother Theodore's recovery from frequent and
1. dangerous illnesses, was now gone. "Who now can save our
1. Mother?" the Sisters asked one another at her death.

American Postulants Join the Community

Postulants born in America had entered in the course of the fifteen years, many of them second and third generation Americans whose families had followed the trend westward at the opening of new lands; others whose families had been established for years in Michigan, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana. Among the postulants were two noteworthy ones: Eleanor Bailly and Jane Brown. Sister Mary Cecilia, Eleanor Bailly, was the daughter of Joseph Bailly, a Frenchman, and his wife Marie Le Fèvre de la Vigne, a princess of the Ottawa tribe. A highly-educated girl, Eleanor Bailly lived in what is now known as the Bailly Homestead, in Porter County, Indiana, the most important trading post with the Indians in the state. She was the third daughter of her parents, and was born in Mackinac, Michigan, on June 2, 1815. Joseph Bailly moved his family to northern Indiana and set up his headquarters there. During Father Maurice de Saint-Palais' visits to the Bailly Homestead in the years preceding his elevation to the bishopric, he had become acquainted with the family, and through his encouragement, Eleanor made application for entrance into the Sisters of Providence in November, 1841. Remarkable for her musical ability

and especially for her instinct for good management, she held successively the posts of teacher, superior of the Institute, and first assistant to Mother Theodore, and became her successor as Superior-General. She was destined to lead a long life of activity and zeal.

Sister Anastasie, Jane Brown, entered the novitiate in January, 1844. She was at home at St. Mary's having attended the Academy for two years (1842-44). The daughter of the zealous pioneer, Aloysius Brown, she imbibed his love for the faith and his interest in cooperating in the spread of Catholicity. The small church at North Arm, Illinois, built by Aloysius Brown, is a reminder of his endeavor as a lay catechist to spread the faith. The building, long since replaced by a suitable church, still stands, a memorial to his zeal. Sister Anastasie was also to occupy posts of responsibility — teacher, local superior, second assistant to Mother Theodore, and finally, third Superior-General.

Sister Mary Ambrose O'Donald and her sister, Sister Mary Angèle, entered the Community about the time it completed its first decade. Born in Pennsylvania, they entered from Peru, Indiana, where their parents had located. Sister Mary Ambrose's trip in an oxcart was long immortalized on every Foundation Day from 1850 to 1912.

The second volume will follow the fortunes of the Community from the day of Mother Theodore's death, May 14, 1856, to the early years of the nineteenth century, and will detail the many changes that the increasing tempo of life demanded.

One point of interest must be noted. For all the years that Mother Theodore lived in Indiana, St. Mary-of-the-Woods was the central point at which priests, missionaries, and friends converged. Other communities made permanent foundations in Indiana about the time of her death in 1856 and somewhat later than that, but St. Mary-of-the-Woods remained a center of influence and culture. Its history during the nineteenth century parallels the ecclesiastical history of the state, and the development of the Community kept pace with the social movements in Indiana. The influx of other congregations did not detract from this influence, but intensified it. Through the encouragement of the Sisters of Providence, institutions for the relief of the poor and aged came into the state. Emergency situations called for new ventures by the Sisters of Providence, and in these emergencies cooperation was not wanting, although teaching seemed always to be the great duty set before the Congregation.

The name of Bishop Bouvier disappeared from the Community annals after the time of his death in Rome in 1854, and with his death, the Sisters of Providence in America lost a true friend. No such services as those His Lordship performed to defend his American flock were needed after 1847 when the Community came fully under the control of Bishop Bazin and his successors, and the French ties were inactive.

Father John Corbe, the chaplain of the Community from 1842 to 1872, was to remain for sixteen years after the death of Mother Theodore with the Community for which he sacrificed his return to France and a peaceful retirement. While figuring prominently as the defender and protector of Mother Theodore during the years of trial, his work for the Sisters of Providence was not finished. He was to sustain the Community through another period when conflicting internal views threatened to cause discord and sorrow among the Sisters.

The Congregation was formed to honor Divine Providence, and the progress of the years has justified its dependence on this great attribute of God. Through trials and tribulations of the early years, God cared for the Community and protected it, giving it a great spirit of unity and charity. This protection did not fail and is especially evident during the second fifty years of the Community's history. The guiding hand of the Foundress had been removed, and her daughters tried, each in her own way, to realize the ideals of the Congregation. When all seemed lost, the Providence of God failed not, and when human errors crept into the management of the Community, then did God's power show itself, as the Spanish say, "writing straight with crooked lines."

NOTES — CHAPTER I

1. J. F. Alric, S.J., *Histoire de la Congrégation des Soeurs de la Providence de Ruillé-sur-Loir (Sarthe), France*. (Communauté de la Providence, Ruillé-sur-Loir, B.P. 24, 72 340 La Chartre, sur-le-Loir, France, 1948), p. 41.
2. Tony Catta, *Father Dujarié*. English translation by Edward L. Heston, C.S.C. (Milwaukee: Catholic Life Publications, Bruce Press, 1960), pp. 185-207.
3. Lettre d'Obéissance de la Supérieure Générale à Soeur St. Théodore Guérin. 16 juin, 1840. Original in S.M.W.A.

CHAPTER II

Interim Events. Tentative Reorganization under Mother Mary Cecilia

New Schools Opened: New Alsace, Washington, New Albany,
Cannelton, Lafayette.

Mother Theodore was gone. Some time had passed since the little group of Sisters had borne their Mother through the lovely May day to the little forest cemetery of St. Anne where they had laid her to rest next to the still fresh grave of Sister St. Francis Xavier. Slowly and sadly they had returned to the bereft convent, the monument she had left them of her love and care. Never again would they glance up at recreation to meet her motherly smile, or hear her familiar voice in the chapel in the Rosary or community prayers, or see her awaiting them at the convent door on their return from mission.

Every room, every corridor of the motherhouse was freighted with memories of her, her vacant prie-dieu in the chapel, her place in the community room and in the basement refectory. Her light step still echoed along the halls, and every tree and bit of shrubbery, the very flowers in the garden which had all received her thought and care, spoke of her in insistent tones to the heartbroken Sisters. Nevertheless her teaching held true. Her brave words, as she sat grief-stricken at the head of the bed where, in the January preceding, Sister St. Francis Xavier had just breathed her last, recurred with their lessons of courage and resignation. No teaching shone with more steady brilliance from her own life than this lesson of courage. How many times amid the countless trials of the early years they had seen her crushed and seemingly powerless when some new misfortune threatened, until her faith and courage rose to meet the dark and ominous future. To the children of such a Mother, futile and undue grief was an impossibility. They turned for comfort to the Source where it is never sought in vain, and engraving her counsels deep in their hearts, they bravely turned to the future.

Messages of condolence reached the Sisters after the news of their bereavement became known, and for a long time, letters came breathing love and sympathy. Father John Gleizal, S. J., writing on May 24,

1856, cautioned Sister Mary Joseph Le Fer to take particular care to preserve all letters and documents of the Foundress, and urged that Sister Mary Cecilia Bailly as soon as possible would write brief sketches of the lives of Mother Theodore and Sister St. Francis Xavier.

Stern reality faced Sister Mary Cecilia as she found herself in the position of acting superior-general. She must perform the duties of administration until the time of the coming election in the first days of the August retreat. Taking with her Sister Olympiade, one of the surviving foundresses, Sister Mary Cecilia visited the missions in rapid succession in order to acquaint the Sisters more fully with the events of Mother Theodore's last days. The two Sisters stopped at Madison on the return trip to Saint Mary's and brought Sister Basilide Sénéschal home with them to act as temporary econome. Sister Anastasie Brown, the second assistant, was to remain in Evansville until school closed as she could not at that time be easily replaced.

Meanwhile daily life went on. Bishop de Saint-Palais came with Reverend Michael Clarke to propose the opening of a school in Lafayette, Indiana. This request Sister Mary Cecilia had to refuse as she had no Sisters available. She promised, however, to consider it later as soon as circumstances permitted.

On June 21, 1856, after her return from her trip to the missions, Sister Mary Cecilia went to visit Mother Theodore's grave on the little knoll near St. Anne's shrine, the first time that she could summon courage, as she notes in her Diary, "to visit that hallowed spot."¹ Sister Mary Cecilia's grief was sincere and profound. Her love for Mother Theodore had been tested during the time of the trials of the Community. Her own disposition had presented some difficult qualities, but Mother Theodore had understood her in a way that no one had ever done before, and as no one was ever likely to do afterwards. She had been greatly trusted during the trip to France and its subsequent hardships and misunderstandings; and now, in this interim, the Sisters who had known this turned to her with confidence.

Commencement Exercises of 1856

School days at the Institute were drawing to a late close. The editor of the *Wabash Daily Express* visited Saint Mary's and attended the closing exercises held on July 29, 1856. It was some years, he remarked to the Sisters, since he had last visited the school, and he noted

the improvements made there, the enlargement and cultivation of the grounds, and the convenience and elegance of the buildings. In his description of Commencement which appeared in the next issue of the newspaper, he elaborated the details:

“The exercises were opened by a beautiful tribute to the memory of Mother Theodore feelingly delivered by Miss Rose Howe. Her touching invocation to the departed brought tears to many a pair of bright young eyes. A requiem [sic] was sung by the pupils. Premiums for proficiency and good behavior during the term were distributed. The whole concluded by a short but eloquent written eulogy upon the character of Mother Theodore by Dr. Ezra Read of this city. The address was conscientiously truthful — without attempt at display — had none of the tinsel or ornament. The subject did not need it. The gracious simplicity of her whole conduct, her lofty ambition for good, were faithfully mirrored in pure English undefiled.”

“I learn that the number of pupils in attendance is larger than ever before. The institution is now so well established that the death of the late Mother Superior will not impair its usefulness. The beauty and healthfulness of its location, the unremitting care and attention of the Sisters, and the skill of the teachers, render it worthy of its increasing success.”²

The pupils, numbering one hundred, all wore bands of black crepe on their sleeves in memory of Mother Theodore, whom they had known and loved. These were the times in the Institute when the small number of boarders made it possible for Mother and all the Sisters to know the children personally, and possible also for each child, from her seat in the back of the chapel on Sundays, to identify and recognize each member of the Community. Mother Theodore had been a mother to the pupils as well as to the Sisters, and each girl felt her death as a personal loss.

Sister Mary Cecilia's Circular

The approach of August was bringing to conclusion the duties of administration which had fallen to Sister Mary Cecilia's lot. In the election of 1854, Sister St. Francis had been continued in the office of Mistress of Novices, Sister Mary Cecilia elected first assistant, and Sister Anastasie, second assistant. The death of Sister St. Francis

occurred in January, 1856, and on March 2, 1856, Mother Theodore placed Sister Mary Cecilia in charge of the novitiate, thereby relieving her of her duties at the Institute; but Sister Anastasie still remained in Evansville. The work facing Sister Mary Cecilia was carried out with single-minded energy. She tried to arrange everything as Mother Theodore would have done, and followed the directions in the Rule for such an emergency. She announced the coming elections by circular in which she called attention to the critical situation which must be met:

If the annals of religious houses should be searched, I doubt if a case similar to ours can be found; an instance wherein the first and most important seats were made vacant at nearly the same time, and the Community bereft suddenly of those who had led it for so many years. . . . We must make choice of a superior-general, a mistress of novices, an econome, and perhaps a secretary. We shall need the light of the Holy Spirit to choose wisely from our number. I suppose no one can feel hurt if I say the truth and candidly avow that we are a poor set to choose from. . . . We have then to find out amongst us those that are the least incapable, and these we must select for the offices mentioned. And God grant that the one who is selected to fill the place of superior-general may have the humility to accept with submission the seat of Mother Theodore which she filled with such dignity, capacity, and universal approbation.³

It is strange to note that the posts of first and second assistant were not mentioned as offices to be filled. The organization of the Community was approaching the stipulation of the Rule of 1835 that the Community was to be governed by a superior-general, assisted by a council of five persons: a first assistant, a second assistant, a mistress of novices, an econome, and a secretary.⁴ While it would not yet be possible to take five Sisters away from the active work of the missions, the need of a first assistant who could act also as secretary would seem imperative.

The first week of August found the Sisters coming home from the missions of Jasper, Fort Wayne, Vincennes, Terre Haute, Madison, Evansville, Lanesville, and Columbus. The number expected was about forty-seven as two Sisters were generally detailed to stay in Fort Wayne and two at the orphanages in Vincennes. The Sisters had few personal belongings at any time, and the motherhouse could easily

supply this small number of Sisters with changes of linen and clothing during their brief stay. The little basket each one carried on her arm was large enough to contain all she needed. August fourth found them at St. Mary-of-the-Woods, brought thither by stage, wagon, railroad, and a few, perhaps, by canal boat. There were sad visits to Mother Theodore's grave, and a second sharing of their grief with one another since, dispersed in their various missions over the state of Indiana, the Sisters had not been able to attend Mother's funeral.

Thoughts turned, as they were bound to do, to the individual who would be their next Mother. Those who knew Mother Theodore well felt that anyone who took her place would, humanly speaking, be a sad substitute. Some of the senior members knew that Mother Theodore had placed high hopes on Sister St. Liguori Tiercin as her probable successor, but the latter's early death had shattered that hope. Mother Theodore had begged Mother Mary to send her a few Sisters from Ruillé who could take over the care of the Community, but none could be spared. Mother Theodore had stressed the fact that experienced superiors were needed if the Community was to receive the formation and guidance necessary to make it a spiritual force.

Our American Sisters are good and full of good will; but it is useless for us to try to make superiors out of them. They understand nothing of governing, not even of directing and regulating the temporalities of a house. Sister Mary Cecilia alone is an exception to this general rule.⁵

Two years later, she returned to the subject:

I am consoled in seeing how much progress Sister Mary Cecilia has made in virtue since you saw her. She seeks God with all her heart. She took perpetual vows this year. I am happy to see that she has the esteem of all the Community. She will be very useful if she lives, but she is not at all strong.⁶

Sister St. Francis had not been so sanguine in the opinion she expressed to Bishop Bouvier: "As a teacher, Sister Mary Cecilia is preeminent; as an assistant, she leaves much to be desired."

Other possibilities were negligible. It was the intention of the Community to fill the office by electing the person who met most closely the qualifications demanded by the Rule as to age, stability, experience, and capacity for leadership of the Community. Some of the Sisters, able, mature, and noted for their piety, had been members of other

communities previous to entrance; Sister Gabriella Moore, universally respected, was a widow, and therefore also ineligible for the post. Sister St. Vincent Gagé, one of the original six, had been constantly employed as a local superior, but the Sisters did not favor her appointment as Mother. Her natural fearfulness and indecision had led her to be afraid of sheltering Mother Theodore in Vincennes when the latter incurred Bishop de la Hailandière's wrath and sentence of removal from office in 1847.⁷ This treatment of *Notre Mère* might be forgiven as she herself forgave it, but it would not be overlooked when election to the superior-generalship was in the offing. Many things were in Sister Mary Cecilia's favor: her superior education, her loyalty to Mother, the trust Mother Theodore had put in her, and her previous experience in the Council. Moreover, she had the desirable canonical age as she had passed her forty-first birthday. She had her failings like all human beings: she possessed a strong imperious will, a highly nervous temperament, and lacked the steady, tactful disposition of Mother Theodore who had led her Sisters firmly but gently along the path of perfection. Although much of Sister Mary Cecilia's ability had been demonstrated in the educational work of the Community, she had the trust and confidence of the senior Sisters. All things seemed to point to her as the most likely candidate.

The General Chapter of 1856

Father Adrian Van Hulst, S.J., arrived early for the August retreat. On the morning of the seventh, the Great Silence began at nine o'clock, and the work of the elections began. The first session was taken up by the assembling of the Chapter which was made up of the previously-elected home superiors (of whom only two were surviving), and the local superiors of the houses having seven or more Sisters, supplemented by an equal number of Sisters — either local superiors or private Sisters — chosen by the first-named group of electors. The list when drawn up numbered ten electors: Sister Mary Cecilia Bailly, Sister Anastasie Brown, Sister Basilide Sénéchal, superior at Madison and acting economie; Sister St. Vincent Gagé, Superior at St. Augustine's, Fort Wayne; Sister Mary Margaret McGrann, superior of St. Mary's Orphanage, Vincennes; Sister Agnes Dukent, superior at Jasper; Sister Austin Graham, superior at Terre Haute; Sister Catherine Seip, superior at St. Mary's School, Fort Wayne; Sister Joachim

Bodin, superior of St. Vincent's Orphanage, Vincennes; and Sister St. Charles Ryan, superior at Lanesville. It was quite evident that the Community was not yet large enough to supply the desirable number of twenty Sisters in the general chapter stipulated by Article 18, Chapter II, of the Constitutions.

Bishop de Saint-Palais presided at the election at which Sister Mary Cecilia was elected superior-general with nine votes of the ten cast; Sister Anastasie, first assistant; and Sister Basilide, econome. Sister Mary Joseph Le Fer de la Motte, though not a member of the Chapter, was elected unanimously mistress of novices. No secretary was elected, and Mother Mary Cecilia continued to act as her own secretary. In this Chapter it was necessary for Bishop de Saint-Palais to give two dispensations on account of the lack of the required number of years of profession: one to Sister St. Charles Ryan, to act as a delegate, and another to Sister Mary Joseph Le Fer who lacked the number of years of profession necessary to hold the position for which she was eminently fitted.

The form of government previously in operation during the formative years of the Community had been a merged General and Particular Council. The Particular Council was made up of the superior-general and her elected assistants; the General Council included local superiors distinguished for prudence and experience, who were in charge of houses numbering seven or more Sisters. Whenever it was possible, their advice was sought and their opinions and suggestions taken into consideration.

By the action of this Chapter of 1856, the Particular Council would henceforth assemble separately and assume to itself the consideration of questions which the Rule and Constitutions submitted to its exclusive deliberation and action.⁸ The General Chapter, numbering but ten members in 1856 would, by the addition of the econome and the mistress of novices and two additional delegates, bring the number in future chapters up to fourteen. When other more important houses were opened, or when the smaller ones increased in personnel, the number would show a variation, very likely in the direction of increase. This separation of the two Councils, except for purposes of election, and for general affairs as provided for at the time of the General Chapter, was approved by Bishop de Saint-Palais and Father Corbe; but for some years after, in matters of great importance, the opinions of experienced local superiors were still asked for.

On August 15, 1856, seven postulants were vested;⁹ six novices made temporary vows;¹⁰ and four Sisters made perpetual vows.¹¹ The names of some of these Sisters will recur in this history with more or less renown.

Universal contentment and peace followed the proclamation of the elections, and the security fostered by the resulting good organization of the Community accompanied the Sisters as they went away happily to their various missions.

Now and then news of the Community in America reached other interested persons besides those at Ruillé. In the correspondence between Father Audran and his relative, Bishop de la Hailandière, the former incumbent of the See of Vincennes, stray items show outside opinions of the Community:

Mother Theodore died after one year's illness. The Bishop, Fathers Chassé and Audran were invited to assist at funeral. She left her Community very solidly established, happily for the diocese, so that her death will have no consequences which might cause fear for the future. Sister M. Cecilia assumes direction of this Community now become numerous and flourishing.¹²

On August 22, Mother Mary Cecilia was approached by a harassed priest, Reverend Arnold Pinckers, O.S.F., newly-appointed to New Alsace, Indiana, who came to ask for Sisters for his mission. A pronounced lack of harmony had existed between the parishioners and his reverend predecessor, and the same feeling carried over to the new priest's administration. The pastor hoped that the presence of the Sisters would influence the people and promote good will. To help effect this result, Mother Mary Cecilia and her Council decided to accept the mission, but in order to send Sisters there, it was necessary to reduce the number on other missions. Sister Alphonse Brutscher was named superior, and Sisters Lazarus Smith, Boniface Senninger, and Eugenia Gorman made up the chosen group. Mother Mary Cecilia and Sister St. Urban accompanied the Sisters and remained with them until September fourth.

There were many difficulties to be overcome on account of the hostile dispositions of some of the members of the parish. The house destined for the Sisters was occupied by the schoolmaster who would not give it up. As a consequence, the Sisters were obliged to stay some weeks in the rectory while the priest lodged elsewhere. Finally, the

schoolmaster was forced to vacate the house, and the Sisters took possession of it. This gave them the advantage of being in their own convent and of having a fairly good schoolroom; but otherwise they were poorly lodged and deprived of ordinary conveniences. They taught both boys and girls, but in separate buildings, and the classes were well attended.¹³

The difficulties in the parish still continued, but the people never entertained any unkind feeling toward the Sisters. However, when the Bishop ordered the removal of the pastor, the Sisters had to withdraw.¹⁴

On July 23, 1857, the Sisters from Jasper arrived home somewhat earlier than usual for the retreat. The withdrawal of the pastor for the better part of a year, had left the Sisters without any spiritual ministrations; and in addition, the combined convent and school building was so badly in need of repair as to constitute a real danger to the health of the Sisters.¹⁵ The mission of Jasper, "our eldest daughter," as Mother Theodore affectionately called it, had been begun when the parish was poor and struggling, and without the usual formal contract. Mother Mary Cecilia withdrew the Sisters when the circumstances became insupportable, but matters were happily adjusted under Reverend Bede O'Connor, O.S.B., and the Sisters resumed their charge of the school on February 14, 1858.¹⁶

Deaths Among Important Clergymen

The year 1857 was a transition year in many ways. It marked the disappearance and the decline of notable men in the diocese. Father Joseph Kundek, the builder and organizer of the parish at Jasper, noted for his untiring energy and loyalty to his people and the Sisters of Providence, had been stricken with a serious illness early in the year. A futile trip to French Lick to "take the waters," as the expression goes, did nothing for the incurable malady that had attacked him, and his death occurred when he was but forty-seven years old.¹⁷ The death of Father Simon Lalumiere also was a great loss to the Community. From the very beginning, this good priest had been a support in the days of trial, and in more peaceful times his friendship continued. It was Father Lalumiere on horseback and waving his white scarf, who headed the procession of welcome to meet Mother Theodore on her happy return from Vincennes in 1847 after her agony and the heartbreaking, but invalid, deposition by Bishop de la Hailanière.¹⁸ While Father

Lalumiere was pastor at St. Joseph's, Terre Haute, he succumbed to a pulmonary disease. It was thought that he had put himself too trustingly into the hands of an inexperienced doctor, even a charlatan, as it was said, for treatment.¹⁹ Father Lalumiere was highly regarded in Terre Haute. Mr. Richard W. Thompson says of him:

The pastor of the Catholic Church then was Father Simon Lalumiere, and I desire to say that in my opinion he was one of the best and purest men that ever lived on earth. I never knew a man whose pure life impressed me as much as his did, and he and I were warm friends. . . .

He was born down at Vincennes. He was at nearly all the social gatherings, and was universally beloved by all the people. The affection for this man was really remarkable. He used to visit at my house, and I used to call on him at his house, and we were on terms of the most intimate friendship. I converted Father "Lally," as we used to call him, to be a Whig, when he was stationed at Washington, Daviess County, and he used to tell me laughingly, he would convert me to be a Catholic. . . .

Father Lalumiere enjoyed a joke as much as any man. When the good man died in 1857 there was universal sorrow throughout the community.²⁰

Father Lalumiere's death left St. Joseph's without a pastor, and Bishop de Saint-Palais began negotiating with the Jesuit Fathers to take charge of the parish. The Jesuits knew the locality as several of them had come regularly from St. Louis to give the retreats at St. Mary's. Father Francis di Maria, S.J., was appointed temporarily to the post by the Provincial until the mind of the Father-General in Rome could be ascertained. The negotiations went on for some time. The Bishop was most generous in the terms he offered, but after a tenure of three years, the Jesuits were withdrawn. The chief reason for the unwillingness of the Jesuit authorities to take over the small mission was the lack of opportunity for training their young members who could not be properly educated in an isolated locality where advanced studies could not be pursued. Father di Maria urged the retention of Terre Haute, but the opening of the new Jesuit scholasticate on the College Farm, North St. Louis, brought the matter to a climax, and the decision came that the Terre Haute mission should be given up. Father di Maria stayed until

August, 1859, and Father John Beckwith, S.J., assisted by Brother Clement Bocklage, remained until almost the end of 1860.²¹

Terre Haute was then a flourishing town of 12,000. The church built by Father Lalumiere was a large one, but too small for the number of Catholics. A new parish became necessary, and arrangements were spoken of for one for the German Catholics.

Openings in Southern Indiana

The Obedience List for 1857 showed the opening of several new missions. The parish of St. Simon, Washington, Indiana, had begun to show a gratifying increase of Catholics. The parish had been founded by Reverend Simon Lalumiere in 1838 and the church named in his honor. The parish was now under the care of Reverend John B. Chassé, long a friend of the Community; and at his request, Mother Mary Cecilia went on September 26, 1857, to install the Sisters in their home and to open the new mission. Sister Elizabeth McNeil was named superior, and her staff was made up of Sister Eugenia Gorman, a young professed, and two novices, Sister Clementine Monaghan and Sister Athanasius Fogarty. A small brick house, located between the church and the school,²² had been prepared for them by the ladies of the parish, and the people were very kind to the Sisters, sending them provisions in abundance. Since every indication pointed to a flourishing school, it was the Sisters' intention to open boarding facilities to girls at a lower rate than that charged by St. Mary's or similar schools. Ninety-two boys and girls, including two boarders, were enrolled by October 1, 1857. Boys were taught on the first floor, girls on the second. A music teacher and a high school teacher had been asked for, but could not be supplied as all the able teachers had already been placed.

The pastor did not reside in Washington, but he came every Sunday to officiate, and twice a week — Monday and Thursday — to say Mass for the special benefit of the Sisters. The children of the parish had but little instruction in religion and the Sisters felt this mission would be a splendid field for their zeal.²³

In November, 1857, Holy Trinity School, New Albany, Indiana, was opened. Sister Mary Ambrose O'Donald was named superior, with Sister Boniface Senninger, Sister Ann Joseph Aubermiller, and Sister Agatha Buchanan making up the little household. Sister Agatha did not arrive with the others as she had been stationed at Lanesville,

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Indiana, and had to be summoned. The Sisters were located in a small frame house on the southwest corner of Seventh and Market Streets²⁴ — the site of the present (1976) convent. The house was well provided for, and the generosity of the people exceeded anything the Sisters had previously met with in opening a house. The congregation provided the Sisters with a house completely furnished, and the schoolrooms with fuel, in consideration of which the charges for tuition were made as low as possible. The pastors promised that if the tuition receipts were not sufficient to support the Sisters, they would make up what was wanting.

New Albany at that time, as in the present, had two nationalities strongly represented in its Catholic constituency: the American foundation, Holy Trinity, under its pastor, Reverend Louis F. Neyron, and the German congregation, St. Mary's, under Reverend Edward Faller. Both pastors desired a Catholic school, but each alone could not support one. It was thereupon decided to combine resources and establish one school with four divisions: two of girls, one English-speaking, and one German; and two of boys, one English-speaking and one German.²⁵ Boys above the third grade in both parishes were taught by laymen appointed by the pastors.²⁶

The closing of the mission at New Alsace made it possible to send Sisters to Cannelton, a little town on the Ohio. Mother Mary Cecilia could not accompany the group, and the mission opened under Sister Alphonse Brutscher, superior, with Sister Irenée Beach and Sister Lazarus Smith. When the Sisters arrived on March 6, 1858, they did not find the house in readiness for them as they had been led to expect from the letter of the pastor, Reverend M. Marendt. He was still occupying the house when the Sisters came, and remained there for nearly two weeks more. In the meantime, the Sisters were obliged to work in the same kitchen with his housekeeper and to eat at the same table with her, an arrangement which was not in keeping with their custom. When finally the whole house was put into their possession there was scarcely any furniture in it. The ladies of the congregation, seeing the destitute condition of the Sisters' lodgings, got up a concert for their benefit and furnished the house somewhat more comfortably. The house was given free for the Sisters in consideration of half-price terms for pupils.

Boys and girls were taught in this school, but in separate rooms. A new type of work was begun here by the Sisters. For about six months

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during the year, they taught the factory girls reading and writing during their recreation hour. The good behavior of the girls and their eagerness to learn compensated the Sister for the loss of their evening recreation.²⁷

The mission of Cannelton with a personnel of three Sisters remained active until the obedience List of 1862 when the demands of the Sisters for hospital work necessitated the closing of the mission. Many of the girls who came for evening classes were Irish girls employed in the cotton mills. The other industry, mining, created the illusion that the town would become a leading industrial center. Although a remarkable growth in population ensued, the town always remained a small one. In 1858, a second parish, St. Michael's, was opened to care for the incoming German families.²⁸

On May 14, 1857, the first anniversary of Mother Theodore's death, a Requiem High Mass was sung in the convent chapel by Father Chassé and attended by many of the village people.

The Old Thralls House Burns Down

Many changes were evident, and even the landscape at St. Mary's was losing some of its primitive appearance. The old log chapel where the Sisters had heard their first Mass on October 23, 1840, had been taken down in 1853. The old Thralls house, the original cabin which had sheltered the Sisters in their first months in Indiana and which remained the nucleus of the motherhouse until the new Providence was built, was accidentally destroyed by fire on February 22, 1858. Mother Theodore had added wings to the old structure, but after the erection of the Providence of 1853, these dependencies were moved to the rear of the brick building to serve as utility structures. No one wanted to move the little old cabin, "the cradle of the Community," as it was called, and so for five years or more it stood about one hundred feet south of the motherhouse in a cleared space. For a while it served as a day school for the village, but this purpose was given up on April 6, 1857, because of lack of pupils.²⁹

A misplaced stove pipe caused the fire which raged fiercely, and which, within half an hour, had destroyed the little cabin, so full of sentimental associations for the pioneer Sisters. No damage was done to any other building. Sister Maurice, who hastened to the scene of the fire, noted that the Sisters wept when the cabin was burning, but they

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were pleased to have it go that way, as they would never have been willing to remove it.³⁰

Sister Mary Joseph, writing to Mother Mary the day after the fire, said that Mother Mary Cecilia and Sister Basilide were in Terre Haute when the fire broke out, and they were very sad on their return. "As for me, I saw the little corner where Sister St. Francis had her room, and where she welcomed me when I came to St. Mary-of-the-Woods. But I felt my heart rent when I saw the little bell glowing redly in the flames, and I burst into tears. . . . The eyes of Father Corbe who was with us were full of tears."³¹

The location of the Thralls house was marked in 1940 by a granite boulder in a spot approximately accurate, near the present shrine of the Little Flower in Providence Park.

The Community had begun to increase to such an extent that it was necessary to appoint someone in charge of the *lingerie*, or general clothing department. Sister Mary Xavier, stationed at the orphanage in Vincennes, was recalled for this purpose and put in charge in December, 1857. She was a capable seamstress, and retained this post until her death in 1897.

Mother Theodore's Portrait Arrives

When Bishop de Saint-Palais was in Rome in 1852, he had had his own portrait painted. He also ordered a portrait of Mother Theodore to be made from the daguerreotype which the Sisters had persuaded the Foundress to sit for in Terre Haute. The finished picture arrived in New York shortly after Mother Theodore's death, but was left in New York for more than a year on account of the charges for duty and transportation. After the Sisters sent for it, they did not open it for a long time, longing to see at the time, hesitant about seeing the dearly-loved features, lest the sight should revive their grief. Finally, Sister Mary Ambrose O'Donald, who had superintended the opening of the crate, sent for Sister Mary Xavier to view it. Sister Mary Xavier, on seeing it, raised her arms, exclaiming through her tears, "O ma Mère, ma Mère!" The picture could not be put in the community room on account of the fine gold frame which was forbidden by Rule. It was placed in the parlor, but later Bishop de Saint-Palais gave the permission only for the Foundress's picture in the gold frame to be hung in the community room.

Years after when Bishop Chatard succeeded Bishop de Saint-Palais, the Sisters, knowing his strictness about gold frames, put tin foil on Mother Theodore's picture and painted the other gold frames in the parlor black. The artist, in some curious way, had reversed the image on the daguerrotype, so that the heavy chaplet of beads worn at the side appeared to be on the left side instead of the right. With the simplicity of a good heart, Sister Mary Florentine Kehoe later painted over the beads on the left side and painted in a set on the right side. In the course of time, the overpainting disappeared and the portrait showed Mother Theodore wearing beads on the right and left sides. Although this was corrected, the traces of the beads on the left still show.³² Unfortunately, in the painting the name of the artist was covered. It was the same artist who painted Bishop de Saint-Palais and Bishop Bouvier's pictures. As near as can be deciphered at the present time, the name was Darjoi, Dayon, or Joyan.

A Beginning in Lafayette

It was now time to act on the request of Reverend Michael Clarke who had asked for Sisters for Lafayette in 1856. Father Clarke had been changed to Bloomington, Illinois, and was succeeded by Reverend Daniel Maloney, who was in charge of the parish during the foundation of the school.

This establishment was commenced August 27, 1858, the day on which the Sisters arrived. Mother Mary Cecilia accompanied the Sisters, who were four in number—Sister Elizabeth McNeil, superior, Sister Caroline O'Dell, Sister Stanislaus Hayes, and Sister Mary Matthew Meredith. They were met at the depot by the pastor, Reverend D. Maloney, who conducted them to their residence. The church, called the Saints Martha and Mary Church, was located on the corner of Fifth and Brown Streets. It was desirable to have the convent near the church, and consequently the Sisters purchased a small frame house on Sixth Street between North and Brown. Some of the ladies of Lafayette, although not Catholic, had been educated at St. Mary-of-the-Woods, and their enthusiasm for the coming of the Sisters, added to the genuine joy of the Catholic population, pleased the Sisters extremely. The ladies of the parish had prepared a welcome reception, and had furnished the little convent with everything necessary. Cheered by the sincere simplicity and generosity of the parishioners,

the Sisters entered upon their duties with a courage and a happy spirit that more than a hundred years of continued service has only intensified.

As yet there was no adequate school building, but the Sisters used an abandoned school on the grounds for the lower classes, taught one class in one of the sacristies of the church, and conducted the high school classes in the convent parlor. The school term opened with one hundred pupils, and signs pointed unmistakably to the fact that a better building with ampler accommodations would be filled with children.³³ Classes opened on September 6, 1858.

The railroads began to supersede other modes of transportation. National events such as the Dred Scott Decision, the legislation about slave and free states, were disturbing, but formation of banks in the midwest area, and the increased production of foodstuffs seemed to point to a time of great prosperity. Echoes of the national unrest troubled the little convent in the woods, but so far the occupants could not envision the impending civil strife.

Throughout the world great things were happening in the spiritual order that would eventually touch upon life at St. Mary-of-the-Woods. In Baltimore, a young doctor, sprung from a family of famous doctors, felt himself called to another form of ministry. In 1857, Dr. Silas Marean Chatard decided to enter the priesthood, began his studies in Rome, and at their completion, was ordained by Cardinal Patrizzi in 1862. As successor to Bishop de Saint-Palais in the diocese of Vincennes, he was to be long known as "Father Bishop", and was to encourage the Community in the pursuit of philosophy and learning.

On March 25, 1858, in the little hamlet of Massabielle, in the diocese of Lourdes and Tarbes, a poor neglected child saw an apparition of the Blessed Virgin. She heard from the Mother of God the confirmation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, promulgated four years before. Our Lady, honored from the beginning at St. Mary's, had had a special dedication in 1841 when her statue was first placed in the rude chapel. From that day forward she has continued her reign in the hearts of her children of the Woods.

NOTES — CHAPTER II

1. Community Diary, June 21, 1856.
2. *Wabash Daily Express*, August 6, 1856.

3. Letter Circular, June 21, 1856.

4. *Constitutions et Règles des Soeurs de la Providence de Ruillé-sur-Loir, Le Mans*, 1835, p. 5.

5. A Mère Marie, 31 octobre, 1846. S.M.W.A.

6. *Ibid.*, 5 septembre, 1848. S.M.W.A.

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11. Sisters Mary Joseph Le Fer, Mary Xavier Lerée, Agnes Dukent, Catherine Eisen.

12. Audran à Hailandière, 25 novembre, 1856.

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25. Book of the Foundations, "New Albany, Indiana," p. 10.

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31. A Mère Marie, 23 février, 1858. S.M.W.A.

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CHAPTER III

Le

Indiana Has a Second Diocese. Fort Wayne Chosen as See.

Developments in Lafayette. Bishop de Saint-Palais Goes to Rome. St. John School, Indianapolis, Opened. Changes at the Motherhouse.

In 1843, the vast diocese of Vincennes was diminished by the formation of the diocese of Chicago to which Vincennes gave the eastern strip of Illinois, formerly under its control. In 1857, at Bishop de Saint-Palais' request, Vincennes was to be divided again. The influx of families from the south into the Vincennes diocese, and from the eastern states into the northern half of Indiana, made the problem of caring for the needs of the people too great for one Bishop. Accordingly, the diocese of Fort Wayne was set off, comprising the upper half of the state with the division line being the present northern boundary of the Indianapolis archdiocese.

Conjectures were many as to who would be chosen as Ordinary. Sister Mary Joseph le Fer in a letter said that she had heard at least ten names, but she did not list them. All the priests of the locality were keenly interested in a speculative way, and but very few in a personal manner. There were many who favored the appointment of Reverend James Frederic Wood, whose American ancestry had a strong appeal. The Indiana clergy knew Father Wood as his parents had lived in Richmond, Indiana, in the eighteen-forties. It was also generally known that his name and that of Reverend Julian Benoit, for years pastor at St. Augustine's Church, Fort Wayne, had been suggested. Surprising in some respects, however, was the announcement of the appointment of the Reverend John H. Luers, pastor of St. Joseph's Church, Cincinnati, to the newly-created see. The choice of the individual was the surprise, but not the selection of a German bishop. The current feeling among the clergy of the upper half of the state was that the new bishop should not be French since the previous bishops of Vincennes had all been of that nationality. The rapidly increasing German population in the northern half of Indiana needed someone who was of German descent to care for its particular needs. The same

recommendation was made again when there was question of a successor to Bishop Luers.¹

Welcome to a German Bishop

On January 26, 1858, the Right Reverend John H. Luers, D.D., came with Bishop de Saint-Palais to meet the superiors and see the motherhouse of the Sisters of Providence. His visit was a most welcome one, coming as it did a fortnight after his consecration in the cathedral of Cincinnati at the hands of Archbishop John B. Purcell, assisted by Bishop Maurice de Saint-Palais and Bishop George A. Carroll of Covington, Kentucky. A great demonstration of mingled pride and sadness had attended his departure from St. Joseph's Church, Cincinnati, where he had been pastor. A large delegation of clergy and laity came from Fort Wayne to meet him at Cincinnati and escort him to the new see.² Bishop Luers at first had thought of Lafayette as his cathedral city, but the opposition to this idea caused him to abandon the project.³

The two bishops also visited Vincennes where the clergy, although disappointed that their candidate was not chosen, exerted themselves to show due respect and cordiality; and according to Father Audran's letter to Bishop de la Hailandière, they succeeded in their attempt.⁴

The creation of the new diocese affected the Community of the Sisters of Providence inasmuch as they had two schools, St. Augustine Academy and Saint Mary School in the cathedral city itself, and hoped eventually to open others in the diocese. To their joy, Father Benoit, ever their good friend, was given the position of Vicar General in the new diocese and held the post until his death in 1885.

The new bishop of Fort Wayne found that much needed to be done to transform the growing little town into a cathedral city. Through the energy of Father Benoit, who went through Indiana and even solicited alms from good friends in New Orleans, sufficient money was collected to begin the cathedral. The old frame church which had been erected on the site of the present cathedral was known as St. Augustine's Church and hence had given the same name to the academy. The new church, however, was to honor Our Lady under her age-old title, "The Immaculate Conception," recently proclaimed an article of faith in 1854. The last marriage solemnized in the old structure was that of James Fox and Ellen Gamble. The old church was moved to the east

side of the square, and turned to face Lewis Street. During Lent, 1861, it was destroyed by fire.⁵

A Durable Cathedral Rises in Majesty

The cathedral under construction in 1859 was planned on a generous scale. The cost was estimated to be about \$54,000 with an extra cost of \$9,000 for organ, pews, and sanctuary furniture. The collections made by Father Benoit were supplemented by \$14,000 raised through collections and subscriptions in Fort Wayne itself, and \$2,000 from fairs and bazaars. What was still lacking in the total amount was added by Father Benoit from his own purse. So well was this structure put up under the care of the building committee headed by Bishop Luers and Father Benoit, and the lay members: Henry Baker, Michael Hedekin, Maurice Cody, and Jacob Kintz, that seventy-five years later, when the church was remodeled, the architects marveled that so straight and true a building could have been erected without the modern devices that they had at their disposal.⁶

Accounts differ as to the exact year of the cornerstone laying. A local newspaper of Fort Wayne in its daily column, "Charcoal Sketches," by J. A. Dawson, has the following entry:

June 20, 1859 — The Roman Catholic Cathedral at this place was on yesterday founded by the ceremony of laying the cornerstone in the southwest corner. In the presence of the assembled multitude, the ceremony was performed by the Reverend Archbishop Purcell of Cincinnati, assisted by the Reverend Bishop Luers, Bishop of the See of Fort Wayne; Reverend Father Sorin, President of Notre Dame du Lac, South Bend, Indiana; Father Dillon, priest at South Bend; Father Engle of Vincennes; Fathers Benoit, Vanderpoel, and Wentz of Fort Wayne. The parchment, contents, and the papers, etc., were placed in a glass jar and hermetically sealed, and then the jar placed in a mortice of the cornerstone.⁷

On May 5, 1860, the *Catholic Telegraph* of Cincinnati, reprinted the following notice from the *Fort Wayne Times*:

The German Catholics of our city consecrated yesterday the two bells they recently received for their large and splendid new church. They are of American manufacture and cost \$650. The largest weighs 1,200 pounds and the other 800 pounds, . . . the

three will enable them to treat the city to a melodious chime, suggestive of all manner of pleasant and poetical ideas, instead of the monotonous clangor of a single bell. The ceremonies were conducted in the usual manner by Bishop Luers, assisted by Fathers Benoit and Wentz. Twenty-five ladies and twenty-five gentlemen officiated as sponsors at the baptism of the bells.⁸ Next Sunday, which will be the first communion for the children, the bells will be rung for the first time. Three hundred dollars were collected yesterday from the congregation towards the purchase money — a very liberal sum for these hard times.

The exterior structure was completed in September, 1860, and a fair held in the building to raise money for the interior adornment.⁹ The church was opened for public worship on December 5, 1860,¹⁰ and the first Mass said in it on that day. The dedication took place on the Sunday following the feast of the Immaculate Conception, December 9, 1860.¹¹

The Sisters at St. Augustine's, and Sister Mary Theodore Le Touzé especially, who had seen the beautiful cathedrals of France, must have rejoiced to see a worthy cathedral rise in the new see. The diocese and the parish now owned all the property on the cathedral square except that which had been deeded to the Sisters of Providence. In the center of the square rose the brick building of Gothic design 180 feet long and 80 feet wide, with two towers 125 feet high, on the western front. Truly, as an observant clergyman wrote to an interested friend: "If the Propagation of the Faith knew the present needs of the Church in Indiana, they would certainly give more help. The time for *log* churches is past; they must have permanent churches — and for that 'il faut du *cash*.' "¹²

Two Other Communities Open Schools

The Sisters of Providence conducted two schools in Fort Wayne: St. Augustine's Academy and St. Mary's School. All the Sisters lived at St. Augustine's, and three of them went to the small school where they taught the children of the German population. The people of St. Mary's parish were anxious to have a school of their own, taught by a German community and financed by their School Society. They were finally able to secure the services of the School Sisters of Notre Dame who, in 1865, assumed charge of St. Mary's School on Lafayette Street.¹³

Three Brothers of the Holy Cross came to Fort Wayne in 1858 to conduct a boys' school, although a school for boys, known as St. Augustine's Institute, had been opened in 1848 and taught by Professor A. Walters. In 1871 and 1872 transfers of land between Bishop Luers to Father Sorin, and Father Sorin back to Bishop Dwenger and the cathedral congregation, definitely established the coming of the Brothers of the Holy Cross to Fort Wayne, and their long tenure there in charge of the boys' grade school and later the high school in the Library Hall.

Bishop de Saint-Palais visits France and Rome

On September 7, 1858, Mother Mary Cecilia and Sister Anastasie called on Bishop de Saint-Palais to invite him to come to St. Mary's before he left for his *ad limina* visit to Rome. On the 15th, the Bishop came to St. Mary's and with Father Corbe, was served dinner at the convent. The Bishop planned to leave directly for New York, to stop in France for a short time, and then proceed to Rome. Accordingly, accompanied by the prayers and good wishes of the Sisters, he "took the cars" at three o'clock on the afternoon of September 17. The Sisters heard echoes of his trip. He disembarked at Havre and went directly to visit his family. After visiting each of his brothers, he went to Nîmes where he found some of his former colleagues of Saint-Sulpice. The vicar general of the cathedral chapter, Abbé Azais, in authority during the absence of the local bishop, invited him to officiate at the Solemn High Mass on Epiphany, and to speak to the congregation after Vespers on the progress and needs of the Church in Vincennes. The cathedral was filled, and the sympathetic audience listened to the story of the needs of the orphans, of the struggling parishes, and of the religious communities of the diocese. So warm and heartfelt was the reception afforded him, that the Bishop had to tear himself away from his old friends and proceed to Rome, the main objective of his visit.¹⁴

During this visit to France, Bishop de Saint-Palais demonstrated his deep affection for his Indiana diocese by refusing the honor of the Archbishopric of Toulouse. This imposing dignity was offered the Bishop by Napoleon III who wished to honor in some way the family of Captain Louis de Saint-Palais. The latter had saved the Emperor's life when it was threatened by enemies, taking him aboard ship for protec-

tion.¹⁵ Bishop de Saint-Palais loved his poor and struggling diocese too well to exchange it for any honor.

En route to Rome, the Bishop of Vincennes made the acquaintance of another pilgrim bishop, Msgr. Pinsonneault,¹⁶ of London, Canada, who was also on his way to Rome to pay his first *ad limina* visit. The two prelates were agreeable companions and planned to visit the historic and sacred places in Rome together. This procedure was not according to protocol, however, as the bishops learned. Two bishops did not go around together without a retinue. Each one should be accompanied by one or more chaplains. This situation posed a problem for the visitors as they had no funds to employ clerical guides. They finally solved the difficulty in a truly New World way, by alternating positions: on one day, one bishop assumed his episcopal dignity and the other appeared as a simple priest, and on the next day the roles were reversed. The prelates enjoyed the simple ruse which made it possible for them to go about with sufficient ceremony in spite of their poverty.¹⁷

During his stay in France, Bishop de Saint-Palais went to Comburg to pay a visit to Bishop de la Hailandière, then in retirement in his old home. The latter was very happy to see him, and after greeting Bishop de Saint-Palais with a truly apostolic welcome, he listened with much interest to the news of his former diocese.

After the return of the two pilgrim bishops to their respective sees, the friendly association persisted. It became active again when in 1862 a request came from the vicar general of the diocese of Sandwich, Ontario, to the Sisters of Providence to come and found a motherhouse there. Very regrettably, Mother Mary Cecilia had to decline the Reverend M. J. Bruyère's offer on account of the scarcity of Sisters, and the great reluctance the Community had to break the bonds of central government.

The visit to the Holy Father was a most consoling one for Bishop de Saint-Palais; he brought back the Apostolic Benediction for his flock and he was greatly encouraged by the interest shown by Pope Pius IX in the diocese of Vincennes. Many a time Bishop de Saint-Palais saluted the carriage of the Holy Father as the latter went through the streets of Rome, very much at home in the capital of Christendom. During the Bishop's stay in the Holy City, the important decision was made to open a college in Rome for the education of young American clerics. Most reluctantly, after a final visit to the Holy Father, Bishop de

Saint-Palais prepared to return home. As a souvenir of his visit, he brought a statue of the Blessed Virgin to the Sisters of Providence for their oratory in the garden. Abbé Azais, whom the Bishop had made honorary vicar-general of the Vincennes diocese, paid the transportation charges on the statue.

Before Bishop de Saint-Palais left for Rome, he had approached Mother Mary Cecilia on the subject of opening a school in Indianapolis. As early as 1846, this project had been considered by Mother Theodore when the Reverend Vincent Bacquelin, pastor of Holy Cross mission station,¹⁸ now St. John's parish, requested her to open a school. The decision was made in favor of Evansville, however, and again in 1855 Mother Theodore had been willing to open the mission in Indianapolis, but the arrangements were not complete before her death. It had been the Bishop's idea to open the school in the capital city on a large scale, and the preparations were inadequate. Consequently, there was a further delay.

St. John's Parochial School Opens

In 1858 the subject was re-opened, and in 1859, Reverend August Bessonies was appointed pastor at St. John's, a position which he held until his death in 1901. The new church and school began under the most favorable auspices. Reverend August Bessonies was well known to the Sisters of Providence. He had replaced Father Benoit at Fort Wayne in 1852,¹⁹ when the latter spent eleven months in New Orleans, and he had often visited St. Mary-of-the-Woods. He was just the type of energetic pastor needed at the time. His activities were the typical ones of a pioneer priest, but enlivening them was his generous and self-sacrificing personality. Born on June 17, 1815, to a noble family in France, he was educated at Saint-Sulpice, and had intended to enter the Lazarists until he heard Bishop Bruté's plea for recruits to the Indiana missions. He was not dismayed at the thought of privations or hardships, but on the advice of Bishop Bruté, he remained at Saint-Sulpice to complete his studies. He came to America and was ordained in Vincennes in 1840 by Bishop de la Hailandière, the second levite to be ordained by that prelate.

"I remember Father Bessonies well," noted an Indiana commentator. "He used to come to call on the Kelleher family. . . . My father told me to have a good look at the old priest, then a Monsignor. Father

said I would probably never have another chance to see a man who had been confirmed by Msgr. Guillaume Baltazar de Grandville, a confidant of the great Napoleon.²⁰

Father Bessonies built a school on the corner of Georgia and Tennessee (now Capitol Avenue) streets in 1858.²¹ St. John's School, the first Catholic school in Indianapolis, opened September 5, 1859, with an enrollment of 80 children. The faculty was made up of five Sisters: Sister Mary Ambrose O'Donald, superior; Sisters Mary John Hetfield, Clotilda Burke, and two novices, Sister Mary Jerome Boland and Sister Mary Isabelle Le Touzé. The building prepared for them was a spacious one, erected by Father Bessonies with funds furnished by the congregation, but his funds being exhausted, the pastor informed Mother Mary Cecilia that he could not furnish the house nor could be contribute very much toward it. As expected, the house was bare of furniture, and the first duty of the Sisters on arriving was to set about to equip the convent and school as well as they could. With their limited resources they could provide only bare necessities. Fairs had been held to raise money for the building, and Mother Mary Cecilia's Diary notes that "Father Corbe went to Indianapolis to attend the fair held for our school there."²²

Notwithstanding the fact that much had to be done before the school could be opened with everything in readiness, the urgent demands of the congregation and the expectation of parents of a school for their children precipitated action. The Sisters were forced by popular demand to announce the opening of the school before they were ready to conduct the school properly. As a consequence, some disorder resulted on account of the lack of benches, books, and writing materials; but in a surprisingly short time, the Sisters were able to establish routine discipline and teach regular habits of study. The school opened on September 5, 1859, with eighty pupils, but shortly after, the number reached one hundred. The arrangement provided two separate classes: a Catholic school in which Catholic children of all classes were taught; and a high school, open to Protestants and to Catholics whose financial standing was above the average and who would not send their children to mix with the poor in the Catholic school.²³

There were some difficulties to be met with here which had not appeared in other schools and one of these was the tendency on the part of the ladies of the parish to interfere with the arrangement of the classes. This was not surprising since Indianapolis was a stronghold of

the Women's Rights Movement, the Lucy Stoner League, and many of the Protestant ladies felt qualified to give advice on all subjects. Trained teachers who were able to work remarkable changes in the hearts in their little pupils could not submit to this well-meant guidance. It was impossible, however, not to displease some of the ladies by rejecting their advice, and in some cases the Sisters incurred censure for holding to their regulations; but through prayer, and firm but gentle management, and making concessions where no principle was involved, the Sisters finally were able to establish a good understanding with the parents, and peace triumphed.

The Sisters were very happy with the spiritual advantages afforded them here. Access to the church was easy and private; the pastor was very obliging in arranging the time for Mass and confession, and the Sisters were never made to feel that their needs inconvenienced the zealous priest.²⁴

Very soon boarding pupils entered from Edinburg, Martinsville, Franklin, and nearby towns. The applications became so numerous that before the end of the second year an enlargement of the school became necessary. Two large rooms which could be thrown into one by opening folding doors were easily converted into an exhibition hall, larger than the one in which the first closing exercises were held.

Father Bessonies, radiant with joy on this occasion, congratulated himself on having almost reached the climax of his earthly ambitions. "Now I have only one more desire," he said, "and that is to secure a school for my boys, and then I can apply to myself the old proverb, 'See Naples and die.' "²⁵ Until this desire could be realized, the Sisters taught catechism to the boys before High Mass on Sundays.

News of the Motherhouse and the Village

On November 8, 1858, the Jubilee sermons, preached by Father Cornelius Smarius, S.J., had been begun in the St. Mary-of-the-Woods Village Church. The Jubilee was ordered by Pope Pius IX as thanksgiving for his safe return from Gaeta. The response to the sermons was remarkable. The congregation attended faithfully and, with few exceptions, all approached the sacraments. "An epoch in the history of the little church," notes Mother Mary Cecilia in her Diary.

The Village was becoming more compact, and the feeling of neighborhood which had always characterized it, was more apparent

than ever. More room was needed for the Institute, and on March 31, 1859, the bodies of Sister M. Liguori Tiercin and Sister Seraphine Carroll were exhumed and reburied on the little knoll near St. Anne's shrine near the graves of Mother Theodore and Sister St. Francis le Fer. Since the Community owned no property at the time of the deaths of Sister M. Liguori and Sister Seraphine, they were buried in the village churchyard, then located on the present site of the Conservatory of Music. The village church was to be removed farther into the village, but it was some years before this was effected.

In accordance with new regulations from Rome, the old Office of the Immaculate Heart of Mary which had been said in France by the French Sisters was now suppressed and prohibited by the Holy See. Instead of it, the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin was to be recited. Though the Sisters were perfectly submissive to the decrees of the Holy See, nevertheless they felt regret at discontinuing the old Office. "It was like parting with an old friend," said Mother Mary Cecilia. Practice was begun on May 1, and two weeks later, on the third anniversary of Mother Theodore's death, the prescribed Office was said for the first time.

Mother Mary Cecilia's circulars during these years show the same regard for the Sisters she had always evidenced, but there is apparent an attempt on her part to "Americanize" them — to reduce the amount of emotion shown, and to emphasize rationalization. The July 9, 1858, circular shows some of this tendency:

Leave your house in order, mend your clothes, collect money due you, and bring sufficient clothing as the motherhouse can no longer provide for the number.

The privilege we have of crying when our mission is changed, was last summer carried a little too far; instead of a good-natured cry, there were some right angry ones, giving vent to expressions that were by no means in accordance with religious submission. Dear Sisters, pay attention to this, and see how inconsistent such conduct is with our vow of obedience by which we divest ourselves of our entire *will, judgment, and pleasure*.

There is a principle of government that must be known and admitted in the Community, one which our excellent Mother had intended to put into force, and of which our Reverend Superior has spoken to me twice, I think. It is this: it is not a matter of course that when a Sister has been a superior for a number of

years, that she is to continue to be a superior always. In other Communities similar to ours, it is not unusual to see an able Sister under obedience in an establishment which, during the previous year, she had governed as superior. The same usage belongs to our order and may at any time be put into force. . . .

There seemed to be no particular repercussion regarding the advice given in the circular or by any other direction, and in general, Mother Mary Cecilia's words were received with respect and obedience.

The Lafayette School Increases Regularly

The school at Lafayette developed very rapidly, and the need for more room was apparent. On August 2, 1859, Bishop Luers visited St. Mary's and urged Mother Mary Cecilia to buy the old seminary at Lafayette to meet this emergency. Early in September Mother Mary Cecilia went to examine the property mentioned by the Bishop, but no action was taken to buy it. A year later, August 3, 1860, the Bishop came again to St. Mary's to insist that the Community build a house in Lafayette, and Mother Mary Cecilia was obliged to consent to this plan.

In 1860, Lawrence B. Stockton, a non-Catholic of Lafayette, had donated a plot of ground to be used for a church, school, and residence. This site became the present location of St. Mary Cathedral and included the land to the west of it. That part of the land occupied by the academy was deeded to the Sisters of Providence and in 1861, the new academy was begun and called St. Ignatius Academy.

The Sisters of Providence built the convent and academy at a cost of \$20,000, a considerable sum of money. The academy had a successful career, even though it was limited in space. The building was well constructed, the floors especially being of hard wood in a parquet design. Later these floors were thought too elegant for a convent, and since it was too expensive to remove them, they were painted a dark color. This disguise concealed successfully the beautiful design.

The academy classes were discontinued in 1918, but the grades continued in the old St. Ignatius Academy until the building of the grammar school in 1936. After an honorable tenure of seventy-five years as a convent, the building which could no longer be kept in repair was razed. The parish built a new convent for the Sisters at 1212 South

Street and in return the Sisters of Providence deeded the original property to St. Mary parish.²⁶

Bishop de Saint-Palais returned from Rome in August, 1859. He came to St. Mary-of-the-Woods on the 6th while the ceremonies of the election were taking place, but he did not come to the convent in order not to disturb the exercises, conducted by Father Corbe.

On August 6, 1859, the General Chapter witnessed for the first time the ceremony of demission from office. Mother Mary Cecilia put her Rule Book, crucifix, and keys on the table before Father Corbe, who was presiding, and left the chapter room while the election of the superior-general took place. On being recalled, having been re-elected as superior general, she assumed her duties and presided at the elections of the council members. No secretary was as yet added to the number.

During the three years just completed, Mother Mary Cecilia had been much occupied. She had annually visited the missions, fifteen in number including St. John's, Indianapolis. The era of expansion affected the Community as well as the outside world. The number of persons in the Community was now one hundred including the novices. Space was needed for their accommodation, and the rooms set aside for the use of the novitiate on the second floor of Providence were proving inadequate. The chapel, too, a room on the east side of the first floor of Providence, was occupying space badly needed for the expansion of the novitiate. A new chapel seemed imperative, the academy should be remodeled or perhaps rebuilt, and new utility buildings erected. Repeated demands on Mother Mary Cecilia for help in erecting convents on the missions gave the Superior-General much to be concerned about.

Christmas Festivities at the Institute

But Christmas joy filled all hearts during the holidays of 1859. The joy was not for the Sisters only. Prominent in their thoughts were the "dear children" who did not go home for Christmas but who, freed from routine, relaxed in holiday spirit. Entertainment was offered them and their ingenuity was called upon to produce a suitable festivity. The following program was detailed by Rose Howe to her mother as being held during the Christmas vacation of 1859:

Indiana Polka	Maggie Fergus
Metropolitan Polka	Sue Walleck
Poetry — "Flowers and Music to a Room of Sickness"	
	Written by Mrs. Hemans
"When Night Comes Over the Plain"	
Vocal Duette	Molly Hawn and Maggie Fergus
Guitar Accompaniment	Rose Howe
"Alma Redemptoris Mater" — Variations	Rose Howe
"The Last Embassy of the Romans to Coriolanus"	
Elm Wood Polka	Maggie Fergus
"Run to the Doctor" — an Anti-Calomel Song —	
Mary Nelson	
Accompaniment	Molly Hawn
Agnes Polka	Maggie Fergus
"Interview Between Aurelian and Zenobia After the First Reduction of Palmyra"	
March from <i>Fra Diabolo</i>	Maggie Fergus
Song — "From Greenland's Icy Mountains to India's Coral Strand"	
"Coronation of Inez de Castro"	Mrs. Hemans
"The Grave of Rosaline"	Sue Waller and Annie Nott
Scene from <i>Arabian Nights</i>	
<i>Adeste Fideles</i>	
<i>Ave Maria</i>	
"Kathleen Mavourneen"	Rose Howe

At its conclusion, refreshments were served and night prayers followed. The polkas were performed in measures, a few young ladies wearing triangular armbands taking the part of masculine partners.

Rose Howe gave some insight into the daily round of instruction: "Two lessons a week on the guitar from Sister Mary Joseph, and two on the piano from Sister Mary Eudoxie — practice four hours a day; oil painting on Saturday and Monday."²⁷

Remote as they were, these girls kept in touch with the world. Modern literature had its day also. Rose Howe wrote her mother:

I have a fine time reading about the old Dutch burghers in the first of the *Knickerbocker Papers*. It is really too comical — that list of puns that Irving always manages to bring in all his books. Did you know that Irving is dead?

Baillytown is terribly behind the times. You don't seem interested in the affairs of Europe. You are not incensed against Napoleon who is really proving himself a nephew of the first Bonaparte. Are you in fear for the Pope or of trouble between the Holy Father and Napoleon? Even little St. Mary's has shared in the general feeling.²⁸

The Diary repeatedly mentions the beautiful Christmas weather, especially that of Christmas eve. The Sisters were able to observe this, as they were accustomed to attend the midnight Mass in the village church, and they united their little journey across the campus to that of Joseph and Mary on their way to Bethlehem. The beautiful clear night, the deep snow reflecting the light of the stars made no other illumination necessary, and "the night was so congenial to piety that it passed like a dream of happiness."

An added joy of Christmas day was a visit from Father di Maria, S.J., who, although now stationed at St. Louis University, did not forget his friends in the Woods. He celebrated the High Mass and preached an excellent sermon on the Nativity. A brief visit to the convent later found him advising Mother Mary Cecilia to write to a wealthy lady, Mrs. Hunt, one of his parishioners, who would certainly lend her money.

The extreme cold continued. Mother Mary Cecilia's thoughts were full of anxiety. Would the next January 1 find her able to meet all the debts which she must incur in order to build the new Academy? The Sisters did not as yet have the first dollar to meet the expenses, but as Mother Mary Cecilia observed, "If Our Lord wants it, we shall have it; if He does not want it, we do not want it either." Other troubling but less important events occurred, one, a personal one, which might amuse the Sisters of a later era. "Today, I put on spectacles for the first time. I am obliged to use them. I could not read today a book which I had read a month ago. Well, this is a warning of old age, failing eyesight; today I am forty-four years and seven months old exactly."²⁹

NOTES — CHAPTER III

1. Cardinal Barnabò to Purcell, February 6, 1872. NDUA.
2. Charles Blanchard, *History of Catholicity in Indiana*, I, 156-157.
3. *Our Sunday Visitor*, Centennial Edition of the Diocese of Fort Wayne, September 22, 1957, p. 213.

4. Audran à Hailandière, 26 mai, 1858. NDUA.
5. William S. O'Rourke, Notes from information furnished by Margaret Brennan, an eyewitness. MS. Ft.W.C.A.
6. _____, Notes on Fort Wayne Diocese and Cathedral, MS. Ft.W.C.A.
7. *Dawson's Fort Wayne Daily Times*.
8. Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Bracken, grandparents of Sister Eugenia Logan, were among the sponsors.
9. *Dawson's Fort Wayne Daily Times*.
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20. Anton Scherrer, "Our Town," *Indianapolis Times*, June 24, 1938.
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22. Diary, February 1859.
23. Book of the Foundations, p. 13.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
25. "St. John's Academy Golden Jubilee," *Indianapolis Star*, June 19, 1910.
26. *Lafayette Courier*, n.d.
27. Rose Howe to her mother, Dec. 24, 1859. Bailly papers, Indiana Historical Library, Indianapolis.
28. *Ibid.*, March 18, 1860.
29. Diary, Jan. 1, 1860.

CHAPTER IV

Building at the Motherhouse. Settlement of a Momentous Question

The New Cemetery. New Schools: Loogootee, Ferdinand.
The Chapel of 1863.

The building program which Mother Mary Cecilia found herself obligated to carry out was a very extensive one, but every item of it was essential. Building materials, brick fired in pioneer kilns, did not have the strong composition which later contractors were able to secure. New quarries had opened in Indiana, and cut stone could now be secured. The older buildings and dependencies could be renovated and utilized for other purposes. Available on the grounds was a large quantity of brick and wood which Mother Theodore had hoped to use in the building of a new chapel. In Mother Theodore's time, no good architect was available and that being so, the Sisters had to plan their own buildings, basing them on those of Ruillé or others which they might have seen on their trips to various places. Mother Mary Cecilia was more fortunate in 1858, however, in securing the services of Mr. Diedrich A. Bohlen, a young architect from Indianapolis. Under him and his descendants all the important buildings of St. Mary-of-the-Woods for more than one hundred years were to be constructed.

Mr. Bohlen was born in Hannover, Germany, in 1828. He was educated in the architectural department of the University of Hannover. He came to the United States, and proceeded to Indianapolis via New Orleans and Cincinnati. He accepted employment from Francis Costigan, one of the finest architects of the time. On April 4, 1853, he opened his own office. In 1882, his son, Oscar D. Bohlen, joined him, and the name, "D. A. Bohlen & Son," was created.¹

The major buildings needed were a new and larger Institute and a chapel for the Community; among the minor structures, a new bakehouse, a new greenhouse, a new house for the workmen, and many renovations and changes in buildings already erected. A new bake oven was badly needed, but the old one held out until the day the new one was installed on November 8, 1859. The new one proved

unsatisfactory, however, and was included among the renovations in 1861. Finally, a new oven guaranteed for eight years replaced it.

The new Institute was planned on generous lines, but not more extensive than the need warranted. The first Academy of 1841, with the two frame wings added by Mother Theodore in 1846, and the subsequent addition of several makeshift frame buildings, would have to be used until the new building was completed. The plan was to build the new structure around the old building on three sides, and then when the new Institute was habitable, to remove the older building and erect the front. An artist's drawing of the 1860's, never completely carried out, shows an imposing building, three stories high, with an elegant entrance and classic frontage joining the two wings.

The Future is Entrusted to God's Will

Before anything could be done, however, a momentous decision came before the Council, the same question which had troubled Mother Theodore in 1847,² but from a different cause. The western wall of the Institute building was crumbling; the new Institute would demand a larger ground plan and a higher building. The architect was having great difficulty in finding ground firm enough to support the projected building, and the question was now formulated: Should the Community remain at St. Mary-of-the-Woods, or should it seek a location elsewhere in the diocese? An added factor was the necessity of borrowing money to meet expenses. Although the enrollment fluctuated seasonally from the one hundred in 1856, Mother Mary Cecilia was confident it would rise. If a lasting foundation could not be made at St. Mary-of-the-Woods, would it not be folly to continue investing borrowed money in buildings and improvements only to find at a later date that it would be necessary to move on to another location? These were some of the great questions to be settled. In the meantime, some news of the quandary of the Sisters had leaked out, and a very pressing letter from the Reverend August Bessonies, pastor of St. John's, Indianapolis, and one from Mr. James McKernan, an influential Catholic gentleman of the same town, invited the Sisters to come and settle in the vicinity of Indianapolis. The arguments advanced were so weighty, and the predicament so serious, that it seemed natural to consider such an offer. The land owned in 1860 by the Sisters at St. Mary-of-the-Woods was not extensive enough to justify too large a development.

Indianapolis apparently offered a greater scope for the works of charity to which the Community was pledged: poor children to be instructed, sick to be visited, and the possibility of more postulants and academy students.

These advantages were offset by the amount of money already invested in the buildings at St. Mary-of-the-Woods, and the difficulty and embarrassment attendant upon beginning again in a new place, a procedure which would have undoubtedly retarded the progress of the Community a few years. These various ideas conflicted so strenuously that the Council members, conscious that it was only God's Will in the matter which they really sought, had recourse to prayer to settle the question. Accordingly, it was decided to defer the decision of the matter until the next day, Ash Wednesday, 1860.

After the Mass in the church, the councilors met to decide whether to remain permanently at St. Mary-of-the-Woods, or to stop all improvements commenced and to move elsewhere as soon as this could be done. The decision arrived at was unanimous. The Community would remain at St. Mary-of-the-Woods. The communication of the unanimous sentiment relieved each of the councilors of a great anxiety and imparted a feeling of joy. The basis of the decision rested on the conviction that God Himself had selected this site for the Community. One attempt had already been made to seek another home, but by the intervention of Providence, the difficulties were removed; again at a later period, great inducements would be offered to transfer the Community to a very favorable location on the Ohio, but they would be rejected; consequently, St. Mary-of-the-Woods remained the permanent motherhouse of the Sisters of Providence.

The decision once made, other considerations were reviewed. There was a decided advantage, the Sisters said, "in the secluded situation of the present site from the standpoint of a motherhouse. It will always be a retired spot, having an immovable barrier, the river, which nature itself had formed." They observed further that from the experience of ages, communities situated in places difficult of access have preserved unaltered the spirit of the institute which might be undermined were the motherhouse too close to a large and populous center. The definite advantages of a boarding school sufficiently far removed from the excitement and distractions of city life, added new weight to the decision.

In peace, the councilors adopted the resolution of discarding forever

the thought of moving from St. Mary-of-the-Woods. As if in approval of this decision, word came from the architect that he had discovered solid ground on which to build the new academy, and this discovery was made while the deliberations were in progress.³

Money was always needed at the Institute, and through the agency of Mr. Joseph Buchanan, father of Sisters Mary Bernard, St. Felix, Mary Antoinette, and Agatha, a lot at Huntington, Indiana, which had been taken in lieu of tuition, was sold for \$300; and later through Mr. Hickox of Terre Haute, lots given by another family for the same reason were sold.

Immediately following the momentous decision of Ash Wednesday, Mother Mary Cecilia began plans to add more acreage. The Community had purchased on October 13, 1857, a tract of 30.39 acres immediately east of St. Anne's Chapel. The little cemetery on the knoll would not suffice for a suitable last resting place of the Sisters, and Mother Mary Cecilia planned to use the new purchase and make it a cemetery which would not need enlargement for years to come. Nothing was done in 1857 to prepare the ground for its intended use. Time slipped by until in 1860 occurred the death of Sister Ludwina Sprauer, twenty-three years of age, at Lanesville, Indiana, the first death since that of Mother Theodore.

Sister Ludwina Dies in Lanesville

Sister Ludwina Sprauer was born in Lancaster, Ohio, but when her parents moved to Jasper, Indiana, she became acquainted with the Sisters of Providence and decided to enter the novitiate. She had a great deal of difficulty learning English, and spoke it very poorly. She entered the novitiate in July, 1858, and received the Habit on August 15, 1859. She was sent to New Albany to the German school there, and in 1860 to Lanesville, also a German School. Her health was always frail, and before school opened, she became very ill with inflammation of the lungs. This was further complicated by typhoid fever, and her recovery was despaired of. Reverend Louis F. Neyron, an experienced physician, and pastor in New Albany, when he heard of her illness, came to Lanesville, but could hold out no hope. The pastor at Lanesville, Reverend Alphonse Munschina, interpreting the wishes of the Superiors, allowed this novice to make her vows upon her deathbed. Sister Ludwina was a quiet, unobtrusive person, and her gentleness had

its reward in the privilege she had of crowning her short life by religious vows. Three of the Sisters from New Albany came to Lanesville, arriving the afternoon of her death, October 4, 1860. The difficulty of transportation made it impossible to bring the remains to St. Mary's. She was buried in the hilltop graveyard of Saint Mary's Church, Lanesville. Near her now lie several Franciscan Sisters who died in the same locality in more recent years. The inscription on her gravestone, "Sister Ludwina, Sister of Providence, aged 23 years," is probably the only marker giving the age of any of the Sisters of Providence.

Preparations for the New Cemetery

Sister Ludwina's death and the declining health of Sister Seraphine Jennings turned the thoughts of the Sisters to the unprepared cemetery. Sister Basilide, the econome, hired Mr. Trask from Terre Haute, who had a good stump puller, to clear the ground, and the Sisters helped in removing the miscellaneous rubbish, branches, and logs which had littered up the area. A part of the tract was enclosed by a zigzag rail fence, commonly called Virginia fence, to indicate ownership. On Easter Sunday, March 31, 1861, Mother Mary Cecilia and Sisters Anastasie and Basilide went with some workmen to set the limits of the cemetery, and to select the place where Sister Seraphine Jennings would rest, as each day was thought to be her last. This serious task completed, the three Sisters recalled to their minds their own last end and wondered just where in the holy premises they would be interred.⁴

Sister Seraphine lingered until the 9th of April, and died a beautifully resigned death at the age of twenty-two and some months. She was buried on the 10th in the first grave in the new cemetery, and was carried thither by Sisters Basilide Séneschal, Mary Xavier Lerée, Austin Graham, Ann Walter, Rose Haag, Matilda Swimley, Anselm Hart, and Louise Golden. Sister Seraphine's life showed an unusual history. Born in Ravenna, Ohio, July 14, 1838, she was brought to Madison, Indiana, where the family settled. Here her father, a laboring man, succumbed to the cholera epidemic of the summer of 1849, and the mother, having no resources, was obliged to place her two little girls in the orphan asylum in Vincennes. Margaret, though only eleven years old, was a precocious child, pious, and anxious to become a Sister. Mother Theodore accepted her as a candidate to the Community at St. Mary's in 1849. She remained at St. Mary's very happily, a



THE FIRST CONVENT CEMETERY

Graves of Sister St. Francis le Fer, Mother Theodore, Sister Josephine Monaghan, Sister Angelina Connery. Redrawn by Sister Rosemary Borntrager, S.P., from a pencil sketch by Sister Mary Joseph le Fer.

child, not subjected to the novitiate discipline as yet, attending classes, recreating with the children her age at the Institute; in short, enjoying a happy childhood in the peace of the convent. In August, 1854, at sixteen, she received the Habit, but being still so young, was not sent on mission until August, 1856. She made her profession of vows by dispensation in 1857, at the age of nineteen, as the ordinary usage made twenty-one the age of profession.

Her health was never very good; very soon the privations of her early childhood began to show their effects. For a short time she went to New Albany to replace another Sister, and also to come under the care of Father Neyron's medical skill. Consumption declared itself early, and with the optimism that characterized that disease, she could not be convinced at first that she would not recover. After she had accepted the verdict, her resignation and religious virtues seemed to become more pronounced, and her death was a holy and happy one.

Mother Mary Cecilia's Anxieties Increase

In spite of the fact that Mother Mary Cecilia had once said she felt the first warnings of old age, she was an energetic and resourceful executive. Her judgment in business affairs was excellent, and even though she had to borrow money to carry on the work of the expansion, nevertheless she was always able with God's help to see her way clear to remove the indebtedness. She visited the missions annually, and although they were all located in Indiana, the means of transportation continued to be difficult and the visitations were a time-consuming task. The very things that made her successful as an executive seemed to keep her from developing the general and generous character which the older members of the Community remembered in their Foundress.

Mother Mary Cecilia came from a family mixed in ancestry: a noble French inheritance on the one side, and a strong, though deeply religious, Indian strain from her mother. Accustomed to being esteemed on account of her superior education, she may have unconsciously underrated the education of the pioneer daughters of her Community. At any event, she had not learned to delegate authority; all things had to come under her direction and management: the "grubbing" or weeding of the avenue and path to the station house; the building of a new greenhouse; the moving of the frame buildings from the rear of Providence to the east wing of the Academy, all came under

her attention. Decisions were made by Mother Mary Cecilia, quite often without consulting the views of her Council. Sister Anastasie Brown, her first assistant, never comes into the picture as an individual who was being trained in the art of administration. Mother Mary Cecilia, like a certain class of persons, had the best intentions in the world, but she could not work with her peers. She could do her work only as an absolute superior, or very obediently as an inferior. As time went on, this quality created problems which could not readily be solved.

As soon as the decision to remain was settled — one of the few decided by action of the Council — Mother Mary Cecilia wrote to Mrs. Jane McGuire of Baltimore, one of the Burke family heirs, owners of property nearby, regarding the purchase of a tract of land forty acres in extent adjoining the eastern limit of the Community property and north of the cemetery plot. She proposed to use this land as pasture, and the trees for firewood. "We cannot use coal on account of our costume," Mother observed, probably referring to the effect of coal smoke on white. The sale was not effected, however, as Mrs. McGuire asked more than the land was worth.

In April, news of the serious state of the country became a concern to the Sisters. Sister Basilide, returning late in the month from Indianapolis, brought news of the declaration of war. Accustomed as the Sisters had been to the repeated disturbances in France, the thought of revolution and civil war brought grave concern and anxiety. In spite of the reports, work went on at the new Institute. Contracts had been signed for new plumbing, foundations, brickwork, and these must all go through; and even at this time, Indiana seemed remote from the field of war. Somehow or other, by judicious borrowing and repaying of old debts, Mother Mary Cecilia preserved her credit, and was able to proceed without great difficulty in the building program which, now undertaken, was to be indeed extensive. Agents began to call at the convent, soliciting orders. Mr. Bowes, representing the Davidson Company of Baltimore, dealers in serge and linen material, came every two years. He often took an order for a much later delivery, and the goods came at the time stipulated; but often, also, an order was not placed on account of lack of money. Black serge, white muslin, and blue nankeen were some of the staple items. Mr. Lincoln, of the Wheeler Sewing Machine Company, came to give a demonstration of

his product, and showed Sister Anastasie and Sister Mary Xavier how to operate the machine.

Other and more serious anxieties troubled Mother Mary Cecilia. The expense of the new house at Lafayette was a subject of worry and embarrassment, and the consciousness that she was now in debt to the amount of \$14,500 for the new Institute did not produce serenity. As to the progress of the Community, she was distressed; first, because a number of subjects who were totally unsuitable to the religious life had to be dismissed; and second, because no new subject had presented herself during a space of seven months.⁵

Remote from the busy world as the convent was, yet the book and magazine agents penetrated thither. In March, Mother Mary Cecilia subscribed for *Miss Dill's Gazette*, very probably for the needlework and household hints therein contained. Mr. Bowne, agent for Dunningan and Brother, book publishers, called to take pre-publication subscriptions, and Mother Mary Cecilia ordered the *Life of the Blessed Virgin*. Mrs. Bowne accompanied her husband, and their presence caused Mother Mary Cecilia to miss the High Mass of Corpus Christi which was being celebrated in the village church.

On May 22, 1860, the first excavation for the new Institute was begun. Commencement on June 28 was earlier than usual to allow work on the building to go forward. Rain on this day upset the plan to use the front porch as a stage and very hastily a temporary stage was erected indoors, and "all went off very well."

The New Institute Takes Form

Contracts for the new Institute were drawn up with the firm of Bateman and Ross for 800,000 bricks to be finished by July 1, 1861, and wood for the burning of the brick, at \$1 per cord. The price of brick was \$3.50 per thousand. The contract of March, 1860, with A. Boelsans, called for 500,000 bricks. On May 30, 1860, a contract was drawn up with W. Wagner, stone cutter and stone mason of Terre Haute, for all cut stone work and rubble masonry to erect the foundations of the first story to the west wing. Rubble stone was used on the first story and blue freestone from the contractor's quarry for arched caps and sills for all openings. On the same day, a contract was signed

with William McQuilkin for rubble stone for the foundation of the west wing, to be paid in July and August next.

The old contract which Mother Theodore had signed with the Messrs. Fatout was brought up to date and signed again by Mother Mary Cecilia. The contract of 1862 with the same firm covered all carpenter work on both two-story wings of the Institute. The floors were to be $1\frac{1}{8}$ inches thick and the intermediate floor in the lingerie, or linen storeroom, $\frac{7}{8}$ of an inch thick of seasoned clear white pine with boards not more than four inches wide; two floors of platform stairs, and one small flight to the intermediate floor in the lingerie. Newel posts, handrails, and banisters were to be of seasoned black walnut; the doors, window frames, and baseboards of seasoned white pine. The infirmary in the east wing was to be finished with moulding and brackets of white pine; clothes presses for lingerie and railing of the second floor, of black walnut. All work was to begin at once and be finished by August 10, 1863. Fifteen hundred dollars was to be paid monthly, twenty per cent reserved and paid one-half in three months, one-half in six months, after the architect approved the work.

The contract with the architect, Mr. D. A. Bohlen, to furnish plans and specifications "for the use of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods," contained one interesting and modern provision — the stipulation that a clerk of the works should be constantly on the grounds. Mr. Theodore Hershing was given this position. Various financial arrangements follow, surprisingly like those of the present day. Payment was to be made at stated intervals from 1860 to 1862. Contracts with J. Hinds of Indianapolis for all brick work for cellars of the first story of the west wing, the Sisters of Providence to furnish the brick and pay \$2.85 per thousand to Hinds on October 1, November 3, and when finished and approved by D. A. Bohlen, superintendent. P. Curley, James Britten, and Elijah Vessel excavated the foundation at \$1 a day. A contract was also signed with Scott Nicholson and Company, stone cutters and builders, for stone masonry, stone work and brick work for second and third story of the west wing, and entire east wing; also for stones for foundations and cellar walls, and cut stone, lime and sand. The stones could be from either McQuilkin's or Smith's quarry, and the Sisters of Providence were to furnish the brick. Payment terms were: 85% paid monthly, 15% and interest within six months after the architect's approval of the work. The McQuilkin's quarry was located between Terre Haute and St. Mary's. There was an attempt earlier to set out a

little town called McQuilkinsville, near the banks of the Wabash, but the long name was too much for the pioneers, and it was very sensibly eroded to Macksville, now known as West Terre Haute.⁶

The Cornerstone of the New Institute Laid

The cornerstone for the new Institute was laid on August 15, 1860. The ceremony was performed by Bishop de Saint-Palais, attended by six clergymen: Rev. J. B. Chassé, Rev. Bede O'Connor, O.S.B., Father Corbe, and the Jesuit Fathers, Adrian Van Hulst, John F. Beckwith, and Francis Horstmann.⁷ Within the cornerstone was placed a porcelain vase containing a Latin document, certifying to the event and signed by Bishop de Saint-Palais, copies of the Memorare and the Our Father in English, the "Sub Tuum" in German, and the "Angel of God" and the aspiration, "Jesus, Mary, and Joseph," in French. A small piece of Mother Theodore's veil was also placed in the vase to indicate the perpetuation of the Foundress's identification with St. Mary-of-the-Woods for all time.⁷ The cornerstone was placed in the southwest corner of the Institute.

After the blessing of the cornerstone, Reverend Bede O'Connor, O.S.B., the eloquent Benedictine, delivered the address of the day from the front porch of the old Academy, choosing for his theme, "Wisdom hath built for herself a house," a theme which he developed beautifully and applied perfectly to the building commenced. Present for the occasion were the people of the village, many friends of the Congregation from Terre Haute, and the Sisters, in number ninety-six. The speaker of the day was a loyal friend of St. Mary's, and in many respects the most cosmopolitan of the clergy.

The northwest section of the Institute was begun first, next the east side was completed, and then the west wing. The classic front was never built for many reasons; the opening of the Civil War in April, 1861, and later, the tragic death of the superintendent, Mr. Werner, who fell from the roof on the west side while inspecting the work, greatly delayed the progress of the building. The extreme cold made work during the winter months impossible, and the scarcity of money was a great factor in the delay. It was almost ten years before the three sides of the building were finished, but as Mother Anastasie stated in a letter to Mrs. Rand, on July 26, 1871, "The east wing was finished

first, then the west wing, but the northwest section joining the wings had been in use for some time."

One wing of the old Institute was moved to the northwest end of the new building to serve as trunk room, wrap room, etc. The other wing was moved to the visitors' Home. The central portion of the first edifice remained in use for parlors and offices until the east section of the building was arranged for formal reception rooms. The old structure, the Academy, was then demolished. Sister Celestine Bloomer, then a postulant, recalled the tearing down of the old and honored building.

As the three sides of the new building afforded sufficient accommodations, ample in fact for the needs of the time, the front was not erected. Mother Anastasie, in office as superior-general in 1869, felt that if that portion of the plan were carried out, the courtyard would be too small for the good lighting and ventilation of the other parts of the building. Other very good reasons caused this decision: the loss of steady workers through the war draft, and a pronounced need for more funds. Thus the house stood until 1896 when a different plan was adopted for the front and remodeling was directed by Mother Mary Cleophas.

Mother Mary Cecilia maintained a high degree of excellence in the Institute. Although Sister Anastasie was in charge, nevertheless Mother Mary Cecilia's ideals were carried out. Mother Mary Cecilia was a most gracious hostess. Her polished manner and her willingness to put herself to any trouble for a guest made friends for the Institute.

The conversion of Judge Huntington was a happy event for Mother Mary Cecilia. The Judge had been an early patron of the Institute and had presided several times at the distribution of awards at the closing exercises of the school. Greatly interested in the Oxford Movement, he finally decided to embrace the Catholic Faith and did so three months before his death, Mother Mary Cecilia, by special dispensation, acting as his sponsor.

Requests came in for new schools but many had to be refused, sometimes for lack of Sisters, and again, on account of their location, since Bishop de Saint-Palais would not permit the taking of missions outside Indiana.

Loogootee, a Picturesque American Town

On August 22, 1862, the Sisters began the little mission at Loogootee, Indiana, where Father Moughin had taught the pupils for the

preceding six months. Sister Austin Graham, Sister Ann Mary Hayes, and Sister Mary Ephrem Glenn, a novice, made the foundation. On April 29, 1860, Bishop de Saint-Palais had laid the cornerstone of St. John's Church in this little village which then had a population of 350.⁸ One feature of the day was the presence of the Jasper band. The church was to be of brick, eighty by forty feet, and height in proportion.

The preparations for the Sisters were complete. Everything was in readiness and every necessary piece of furniture in place. The house was a one-story structure, divided into four rooms, parlor, dormitory, spare bedroom, and dining room. A small lean-to structure at the rear was the kitchen. Between the house and the church stood the schoolhouse, suitable in size for this small town. Only one school was needed because no foreign nationality predominated and it was possible to conduct the school on an American plan. Members of the congregation, descendants of Kentuckians, were English-speaking and very American in every respect. The Sisters had about fifty pupils, boys and girls, and felt that the prospects for the future were very bright.⁹ This prophecy was more than fulfilled as the years went by, for no parish under the care of the Sisters ever yielded as many vocations as did this little rural settlement.

The setting of this little mission was very picturesque. Hidden behind the crest of a high hill, so high that only the cross of the present church shows above it, the school and convent seemed sheltered from the noise of passing life. The church of 1860 was replaced in 1880 by a larger one built across the street from the school. The school and convent, both enlarged and remodeled in recent years, of red brick with a white trim on doors, windows, and porch, give an American colonial touch to the scene.

Father Mougin did all he could to beautify the church property. With Mr. G. M. Ginnsz, then a seminarian, he planted young trees. Father Mougin was transferred in 1864, but Father Ginnsz returned to Loogootee later on as pastor and enjoyed the shade of the trees, the fruit of his labor.¹⁰

Ferdinand Opened but Yielded to German Sisters

On September 6, 1862, Father Chrysostom, O.S.B., pastor of Ferdinand, Indiana, welcomed the three Sisters who came to open a school in that quiet Indiana settlement. Sister Bonaventure Neubauer, Sister

Ann Joseph Aubermiller, and Sister Honora O'Donaghue were chosen for the foundation. They were greeted most cordially by the pastor who provided their first dinner in his house, then conducted them to the little home which was only a few steps from the church. The convent was a simple frame dwelling of three rooms, but furnished with all necessary articles. The schoolhouse was of brick and the pastor expected to build a better brick convent for the Sisters. School opened with more than one hundred children, the young girls being taught plain sewing and embroidery.

The congregation was largely German in origin; the people devout and God-fearing. The whole atmosphere was so old-world and so Catholic that one could forget there were unbelievers in the world. The Sisters looked forward to success in their labors. However, after four years of happiness here, the Sisters of Providence yielded their place to the Benedictine Sisters who could more easily supply German teachers.¹¹

The Benedictine Fathers were most generous in their praise of the work done by the Sisters in the Terre Haute schools, as well as in Ferdinand. Writing concerning St. Joseph School to the Monastery of Einsiedeln, Germany, Father Isidore said:

The Sisters of Providence, of whom we have seven attached to the female schools of our congregation in Terre Haute, have over two hundred children in charge in this one congregation, whom they train in piety and knowledge, consolidating in virtue the present, and holding forth good prospects for the future generation.¹²

The Benedictine Fathers had replaced the Jesuits at St. Joseph's Church. Formerly Father Corbe had taken care of the Community and Institute at St. Mary-of-the-Woods, as well as the little congregation in the Village. The increasing number of Sisters and pupils made this work too heavy for Father Corbe whose health was breaking down. The Benedictines, therefore, sent one of their number to officiate in the village church on Sundays and holy days.¹³

In addition to welcome pastoral help, the Benedictine Fathers also came for the eve of Father Corbe's feast, St. John the Baptist. Mother Mary Cecilia notes:

The eve of Father Corbe's feast. Father O'Connor, Father Fintan, O.S.B., and Brother Chrétien of the Christian Brothers, were present at the celebration which consisted of music, as

usual, and of a bonfire in the station lot where seats were prepared under a tree and to which the company was invited after the musical performance.

The music was doubtless furnished by the pupils since Commencement did not take place until July 1 that year.

The Chapel of 1863

In addition to the necessary expansion plans obligatory on the Community if the needs of the Institute and the Congregation were to be properly cared for, Mother Mary Cecilia realized that the room used as a chapel in Mother Theodore's Providence was far too small for their needs. The dimensions of the chapel were never particularly noted, but the chapel itself was a room occupying the entire east side of Providence. In September, 1862, the Institute numbered one hundred pupils in attendance at one time, and the Community would soon have one hundred professed Sisters in addition to the novices and postulants. There was never enough room in the chapel during the school year, especially on Sundays, and never enough in the summer when the Sisters were home for the retreat.

Mother Theodore had wished to erect a beautiful church in honor of the Immaculate Conception, continuing the same patronage under which she had placed the first little chapel in the convent in 1841. The bricks and other material which she had assembled for the beginning of this good work had begun to deteriorate, and what could be salvaged of it was used to build parts of the new Institute. The constant demands for new openings on the missions and improvements at home convinced Mother Mary Cecilia and her Council that anything erected in the form of a church in their time would have to be a temporary structure. Even under that condition, the expense of another building was almost prohibitive. Mr. Bohlen was consulted and his plan for a simple frame structure, with brick foundation, called for an expenditure of at least \$2,500. On January 31, 1863, Mother Mary Cecilia presented her reasons and the plan to the Council. The decision was unanimous in favor of the outlay for building.

All building projects in the country were hampered by the demands of the Civil War, and the drafting of soldiers worked havoc on a contractor's force of workmen. On each holy day — Easter and Pentecost of 1863 — the Sisters said to one another, "Surely this will

be the last time we shall celebrate this day in our tiny chapel, or have to go to the parish church." This last alternative was becoming increasingly difficult as the parish church had changed location many times since 1840, moving farther westward at each removal.

It was not until May 28, 1863, that the work finally got under way. Mother Mary Cecilia notes:

The chapel is commenced today. This is our third chapel; the next one that the Sisters of Providence will build will be the last chapel of the Community — a standing monument to endless ages.¹⁴

On the day of this momentous action, another equally momentous took place, the marriage at five in the evening of Lizzie Hopkins and Mr. Jaira Blackman. Lizzie had been attending school at the Institute, the cost of her education being defrayed by Mr. Blackman whom she had promised to marry. She had become a Catholic, and was inclined towards the religious state, but because of her promise, she made no change. The marriage was celebrated earlier than they had planned, as Mr. Blackman was anxious to escape the draft.¹⁵

The Diary also notes many trips made by Mother Mary Cecilia to Indianapolis, and many consultations with Mr. Bohlen regarding the chapel and the new Institute. On June 12, the foundations of the new chapel were laid. The workmen with all the help they could get from the village came after supper to lay the beams which formed the foundation floor. Even with the extra work force employed, it was not finished in time for the opening of the annual retreat to be conducted by Father Van Goch, S.J. The Bishop gave permission to delay the opening of the retreat one day on account of the extremely hot weather, and to make possible a temporary arrangement whereby the instructions of the retreat could be given in the new chapel. The reception on August 15 was held in the old chapel, but no one except the relatives of the participants could be admitted. Every place was overcrowded that day. Notable among the names of those vested that August 15 was a tall, quiet novice, Sister Mary Cleophas, later to serve the Community in an illustrious way.

The Sisters were greatly pleased with the prospect of having sufficient space in the new structure. It was far enough along in August, 1863, for all to see what the completed chapel would be. The site selected was close to Providence Convent on the west. The building was entirely separate but connected by a frame passageway two stories

high somewhat to the north, and leaving the west door of Providence unobstructed. A west window on the first floor of the convent was made into a doorway, allowing the Sisters easy access to the chapel from the cloister hall. On the second floor, a similar arrangement made it possible for the Sisters in the infirmary to come into the chapel gallery as the infirmary was at the northwest end of Providence.

The chapel itself, according to the dimensions noted by Sister Mary Joseph Le Fer, was approximately seventy-five by thirty-five by twenty feet. The sanctuary was sixteen and one-half feet in depth, and projected into the gardens at the north.

The body of the chapel was divided into four parts by the intersection of the main aisle with the transverse aisle. The long benches across the front on both sides were reserved for the Sisters; behind them on the Gospel side were the postulants, and opposite them on the Epistle side, the novices. Mother Mary Cecilia's prie-dieu was on the main aisle immediately behind the Sisters on the Gospel side; opposite hers was that of Sister Anastasie. The Mistress of Novices knelt behind the postulants, and the Assistant behind the novices. A few of the small prie-dieux used in this chapel are still preserved in the Recluseum.

The two areas below the transverse aisle were occupied by the students of the Institute and any people who came to the chapel. The chapel was heated by a stove which stood about in the center, north of the cross aisle. There were two confessional: one in the front against the west wall, near the sacristy, and the other at the rear of the chapel. A stairway at the rear led to the organ loft and gallery. The chapel was quite large, seating 300 people. All in all, the place was thought to be ample, yet in 1866, Sister Mary Joseph wished that it had been larger.

The sanctuary was unusually large for a small chapel, but it needed to be so in order that the functions at which the Bishop presided — vesture and profession — could be amply taken care of. Small areas to the right and to the left of the sanctuary were screened off, and provided sacristy and vestry. The large front door admitted pupils and people into the chapel without their having to come into the convent.

On November 6, it was expected that Mass in the old chapel would be celebrated for the last time. Mother Theodore's Providence had been occupied for ten years and three months, and the removal from the chapel with the stirring of recollection that always accompanies change, was fraught with memories. After Mass the statue of the Blessed Virgin and the new wooden altar were moved into the chapel.

Although Mr. Burget, the builder, had finished the chapel on the 14th of November, the transition had to be delayed for a few days longer. Benediction was given in the old chapel for the last time on the 19th, and the Mass of the feast of the Presentation, November 21, was the last Mass said there on the temporary altar. The first Mass in the new chapel would be said by the Bishop on the day of dedication.

The Dedication of the Chapel of 1863

The feast of St. Cecilia, November 22, had been chosen for the occasion. It was always a day of celebration, and doubly so because it was the Superior-General's feast. Bishop de Saint-Palais, assisted by Father Corbe, blessed the chapel at half past six in the morning. The blessing was followed by Mass — the first in the new chapel — and all the Sisters received Holy Communion. The ceremony was short, but it was imposing and made a solemn impression on the Sisters assembled in a place where they could see part of it. The chapel was placed, as were its predecessors, under the patronage of the Immaculate Virgin, with St. Joseph as secondary patron. Mass with thanksgiving was finished by eight o'clock; the pupils of the Institute to the number of one hundred and fifty were also present. No High Mass followed as had been intended; the Benedictine Father who was expected to say Mass in the parish church could not officiate, and Father Corbe had to go to the parish church to say Mass instead of celebrating High Mass in the new chapel.

At three o'clock, Vespers were chanted by the Bishop. Father Corbe again could not be present, having to officiate at Vespers in the village church. Between half past four and five o'clock, the Bishop erected the Way of the Cross, assisted by Father Corbe. The ceremony was long but did not really seem so, being performed with so much devotion. Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament then followed. The Catholic children only, came for the erection of the Way of the Cross, but all the young ladies came for the Benediction. The choir sang for the first time in the newly-blessed chapel; the Community then recited the Rosary, and finished all the exercises a few minutes before seven o'clock. The annalist adds the consoling circumstance that the two furnaces which had been installed to heat the house and the chapel were put into operation the day before. The fine weather, the spirit of accomplishment, and the blessing of God, made the day a momentous one.¹⁶

If the frame chapel made so brave an appearance on the day of its dedication, how much more festive did it not appear on the Assumption of 1864! Mother Mary Cecilia had purchased a carpet for the sanctuary and chairs for the Bishop's throne. The carpet was probably a liturgical red since an observant postulant of 1869 added some details:

The curtains on the windows were double. The outside set was of white material; the inside ones of red calico. Both sets of curtains were operated by draw strings. The walls were plastered.¹⁷

The light wooden structure that made up the throne supported frames from which were suspended white drapes. On the background of the drape at the rear of the episcopal chair hung the Bishop's coat of arms newly touched up by Sister Maurice. The bright green embellishment of the mitre, crosier, hat and pendant tassels was in contrast to the gold and silver ornaments on the upper part of the field, and to the dazzling blue of the sea on which the swan of the Saint-Palais family rested. The motto: *Albus inter Albos*, made a slight reference to Albi, the native region of the Bishop, but to the devoted hearts of the Sisters, the prematurely white hair of the Bishop above the gentle face, made the accepted translation, "Whitest among the white," singularly appropriate.

On this Assumption day of 1864, those participating in the ceremonies of vesture and profession followed a new time-program. All the ceremonies of the day were held in the chapel. Formerly the Sisters had all these ceremonies at Mass before breakfast, and then had to attend the village church for High Mass and High Vespers in the afternoon. But now, with the increased space, the profession of vows took place at the early Mass, and reception of the Holy Habit at High Mass at half past nine. All ceremonies were finished at twelve o'clock. Bishop de Saint-Palais officiated, assisted by Father Corbe and Father Van Goch, S.J., who had again given the annual retreat,¹⁹ with three exercises a day, each an hour and a half long.²⁰

A certain amount of confusion attended these ceremonies occasioned by the number of friends and relatives who attended. Mother Mary Cecilia was somewhat annoyed and said she hoped that some day the ceremonies could be private. She and her successors never carried that wish into action. Like Mother McCauley, R.S.M., who once cherished the same wish, she was to realize once and for all that parents

have an integral part in these religious ceremonies, having furnished, at great sacrifice to themselves, the generous participants.

Even the little village was not spared tragedy.²¹ The drawbridge over the Wabash collapsed, and three men, one boy, and three young girls were drowned. Charlie Kearney, one of the men, was a workman at the convent, and one of the young girls was Juliette Thralls, Sister Isidore's sister, descendants of the first family to settle in the village. Four of the victims of the accident were Catholics. The coffins of the four deceased were placed in a straight line down the middle aisle of the village church. The funeral service was read over them as they were to be buried after Vespers in the graveyard of the Village.²²

Earlier in the year the old farmhouse was put in order to lodge women pensioners of the Community in the intervals when the Visitors' Home was not available. The log cabin was always referred to by the Sisters as "Loghouse," because Sister St. Francis had called it that, maintaining, half-humorously, that a log cabin should be of one log, but a house made of many logs should be a "loghouse." The farmhouse was large and roomy, practically a double house, and two Sisters occupied one part while the visitors occupied the other. In Community parlance, the visitors were often referred to as the "Holy Women of Loghouse."²³

NOTES — CHAPTER IV

1. Biographical details furnished by Mr. August C. Bohlen, a grandson, in a letter dated February 1, 1950, to Sister M. Borromeo Brown.
2. Mother Theodore wished to move to another diocese only to secure the spiritual and temporal security of the Community. Cf. Brown, *History*, I, 465.
3. Minutes of the Particular Council, February 21-22, 1860.
4. Community Diary, March 31, 1861.
5. *Ibid.*, March 26, 1860.
6. Notes by A.N. Markle in *Terre Haute Tribune*, March 21, 1948.
7. Sister Anita Cotter, *Souvenir of the Golden Jubilee of St. Mary's Academic Institute*, (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1891) p. 52.
8. *Freeman's Journal*, May 19, 1860.
9. Book of the Foundations, "Loogootee," pp. 16-17.
10. Blanchard, *History of Catholicity*, I, 362.
11. Book of the Foundations, pp. 13-19; Mug, *In God's Acre*, p. 29.
12. Rev. Isidore Hobi, O.S.B., December, 1863, *St. Meinrad Archives*.
13. *Ibid.*
14. Community Diary, May 28, 1863.

15. Community Diary, May 21, 1863. Sister Miriam Blackman, S.P., (1892-1932) was one of the daughters of this union.
16. "The Blessing of the Chapel," from Mother Mary Cecilia's record of Extraordinary Events. MS. S.M.W.A.
17. Reminiscences of Sister Celestine Bloomer.
18. Sister Mary Joseph à Mère Marie, 18 novembre, 1867.
19. Mother Mary Cecilia's Diary, August 15, 1864.
20. Sister Mary Theodore à Mère Marie, 20 août, 1864.
21. Diary, October 10, 1863.
22. *Ibid.*, October 11, 1863.
23. *Ibid.*, May 5, 1863.

CHAPTER V

Civil War Years, 1860-1865 Service in Military Hospitals in Indiana

The war clouds that had been gathering over the country had not passed unnoticed in the quiet woodland Institute. Some Sisters, second and third generation Americans, were constantly receiving news from their homes, and those of foreign ancestry had the spectre of civil turmoil, as they had known it, before their minds. Father Corbe, always interested in the news of the day, was profoundly concerned and pointed out unmistakable portents: the Dred Scott decision, John Brown's raid at Harper's Ferry, and the coming election of 1860. The matter of the Lincoln-Douglas debates was common discussion in the *Freeman's Journal* and in *Le Propagateur Catholique*, Father Perché's New Orleans weekly paper. Both of these were read assiduously by the chaplain and passed on to the Community. They had access also to the *Boston Pilot*, the *Charlestown Gazette*, and even *Le Monde* brought them an outside view of the situation.

The Terre Haute press published daily accounts of the progress of affairs, and it would have been impossible for the Sisters, even though trained to avoid political subjects, not to have been worried. They did not pretend to follow the intricacies of the irritating clash between North and South; wiser heads than theirs found them perplexing; but in the cause of justice and union, the Sisters stood with the North. Father Perché's paper was pro-South; *Freeman's Journal*, pro-North, advocating gradual abolition of slavery. The fiery editor, McMaster, stated boldly that "anyone who thinks slavery can be abolished at once in this country, or that the whole South would be converted to [abolition] must be at best an honest simpleton."¹

This book cannot pretend to discuss the attitudes of the country just before the Civil War. That would be far beyond the scope and the pretensions of the writer. Only a few pages of explanation will be set forth to interpret the complexities and conditions in Indiana.

It could only have been in a prophetic spirit that Governor Wright in 1850, in sending a marble block to represent Indiana for the interior of the Washington Monument, ordered chiseled upon it this inscription: "Indiana is not for the North, nor for the South, nor for the East, nor for

the West: Indiana is for the Union." The events of the decade 1850-1860 were enough to shake the faith of any Hoosier in the validity of the statement and to denominate the inscription as mere rhetoric, but the actual war period was to vindicate it.

Indiana's People Are Sensitive to Freedom

By the Ordinance of 1787, and later by its State Constitution, Indiana was a free state, but by the Constitutional amendment of 1851 fines and penalties were set for anyone who brought blacks or mulattoes into the state. Provisions were also made for the support of blacks already in the state, and their restriction within given areas. These prescriptions, although not rigorously enforced, were on the statute books until 1885 when the State Legislature passed the Civil Rights Law.²

The elements of population were markedly diverse. The southern half of the state had been peopled by settlers from Virginia, Kentucky, and Maryland, some of them slave owners, accompanied by their slaves. The northern half of the state attracted pioneers from Pennsylvania, New York, and a few of the New England states. The French had made the first settlements in the area, coming down from Canada, or up from New Orleans, following the course of the rivers. There were groups of Swiss in small villages, and the great immigration surges of the 40's and 50's had brought many German settlers in colonies direct to the state, and Irish families or individuals to Indiana after a brief sojourn in New York or Boston. In general the Irish settlers came at the invitation of relatives who had previously emigrated. They never came in colonies or large groups, as they were not subsidized by any missionary organizations, but came as individuals when they received or could save the money for their passage. The greater majority of the immigrants were attracted by the hope of religious and political freedom. They desired permanent and peaceful homes, and had no desire to inflict injustice on anyone. In addition, there were still a few Indian reservations along the Wabash, and a settlement of black freemen at Pinkston, in southwestern Indiana.³

Politics, that great Indiana game, was being played in the areas of government. Although the state had been under Democratic control since 1843, the Republican party had won the victory in the primaries of 1860. Harry S. Lane was elected governor, and Oliver P. Morton, lieutenant-governor, with the open understanding that if Lane were

elected U. S. Senator in the coming congressional elections, Morton would advance to the governorship. At a meeting held in Indianapolis on November 22, 1860, to celebrate the Republican victory, both the Governor and the Lieutenant-Governor addressed the audience. Lane's speech was moderate and conciliatory; Morton's was bold and decisive. Morton threw both caution and conciliation to the winds. The gist of his speech dealt with the preservation of the Union and the enforcement of the law should South Carolina carry out its threat of secession. To permit even one state to secede was to open the door to further secessions and strike a fatal blow at the national unity which had been achieved at great sacrifice by the colonies. It would be better, in his opinion, to go to war to maintain the Union than to submit tamely to the demands of a recalcitrant member.

A Prospective Candidate Speaks Out

He said that as far as slavery and the negro question entered into the matter, Indiana had no great interest. Indianians had no desire to bring slavery, or free blacks either, into its domain. Both would cheapen labor and affect the working conditions of white men. Thinking men could see at once that the greatest economic calamity in separating into two Confederacies would be the loss of seaports to the northern unit, as the midwest states would be cut off entirely from the seaboard. These facts were incorporated into Morton's address, and the frank and logical statement of his position made clear to the people the forceful and determined character of their prospective governor. When in 1861 he assumed office after the election of Governor Lane to the U.S. Senate, he had to contend with a house made up of discordant elements, and a state riddled with secret conspiracies. There were Peace Democrats, War Democrats, ardent Republicans, and Copperheads, or anti-administration men. Some of the slave owners of the state were abetting the theory of a Southern Confederacy, and advocating the formation, in peace, of two separate units, a Northern and a Southern Confederacy of States. During the war, at least thirty measures of truce or peace with the Confederate states were proposed.⁴

Governor Morton, thirty-eight years old when he assumed office, had no previous military experience; but he was a man of unbending will, and he did not hesitate to support President Lincoln. His statement that if the President would take a strong stand against secession and

wage war if necessary, Indiana would furnish six thousand troops, was pooh-poohed by the editor of the Indianapolis *Daily Journal* (pro-South) who held that Morton could not fulfill his promise. The Legislature of 1861 was opposed to him and refused to pass the bills he advocated, or to allocate the necessary funds for preparation for defense. In order not to bankrupt the State Treasury, the Governor borrowed from private individuals and firms, such as the Winslow, Lanier and Company, of New York City, and received generous help on his own recognizance in meeting the demands of the war. Out of the struggle, he emerged the great "War Governor" of the state, and perhaps the greatest governor of that time in any state.

The attack on Fort Sumter crystallized public opinion. Petty interests were merged into indignation that the flag had been fired upon. The day after the evacuation of Fort Sumter, President Lincoln called for seventy-five thousand troops to serve for three months, Indiana's quota being set at 4,683 men. The quota was immediately filled twice over, and six additional regiments were offered to the President before the end of the month. Indianapolis was named as the recruiting center, and Camp Morton arranged for on the site of the present Fair grounds.

In response to the Governor's war speech following the attack on Fort Sumter, the State Legislature voted one million dollars for arms and munitions, and the necessary organization for the emergency.⁵

Finally, when the North had triumphed, the Legislature of 1865 had a very cooperative attitude toward the Governor and his measures. It legalized all his actions, paid his debts, and reimbursed him for his personal loans and contributions.

Governor Morton Goes into Action

By energetic action, Governor Morton stopped the shipping of contraband supplies to the South at the river ports of New Albany, Evansville, and Vincennes. The capture of these munitions and foodstuffs raised still higher the indignation of the people against the South. By January 6, 1862, Indiana had contributed more than fifty-three thousand men. The Governor set in motion effective methods of outfitting the soldiers, appointing trustworthy men to see to proper uniforms and equipment. Army rations have never been attractive, and probably were less so at that time to country boys used to an abundance of fresh vegetables and meat. The usual complaints were made that the

food was unpalatable, but it did support life. As far as equipment was concerned, the troops were well provided with arms, clothing, and good horses for the cavalry, so that the Indiana men were the envy of regiments from other states.

The Indiana troops were the first in the field, but the northern soldiers who met the enemy in the first battle of Bull Run were untrained and were defeated. Governor Morton persuaded the men who had enlisted for a three-month period to re-enlist for three years, a period of time which was thought to be longer than was actually needed to defeat the South. Before the end of the war, two hundred thousand Indiana men, or seventy-five per cent of the men old enough to bear arms, had been in service.

The congestion of thousands of men being trained for war, and the return of wounded men to the camps, presented a colossal problem to an inadequately-prepared town like Indianapolis. Epidemics broke out, hospital care had to be provided, and though the diseases and wounds were not always fatal, nursing was needed. Epidemics of measles were prevalent since the recruits in general were from the rural areas and from small towns and had never been exposed to the diseases that were furthered by congested quarters. Twenty years were to elapse before the Red Cross with its manifold methods of training and assistance was to be established. In 1861 there was not a trained nurse, as we now understand the term, in the whole of America. There were many sympathetic women, willing to help, but under no organization so that each one had her own ideas as to the way to carry out her duties. The great contribution of women was made up of their attempts to keep the hospitals clean, and to be kind to the soldiers, but the lack of a uniform method of procedure put their help on a voluntary basis. In some cases, the romantic aspect of caring for the stricken warriors died a quick and natural death when the realistic details of nursing were fully understood. In the areas in which war was waged, the women who volunteered mastered the art of nursing by practical service, and many were distinguished by devotion and self-sacrifice.

Organized Help Needed for Sick and Wounded

Dorothea Dix was called into service as a national Superintendent of Female Nurses. She was restricted at first to providing hospitals in or near Washington with nurses, but later her power was extended with-

out territorial limits. Nurses' pay was forty cents a day and one meal. Difficulties arose between the surgeons and female nurses and led to the termination of some of the appointments and the substitution of religious women. Miss Dix did not favor the services of Sisters as she feared proselytizing. The decision of the Surgeon General in favor of the Sisters (who were generally called Sisters of Charity, no matter what their distinguishing name might be) solved the question. The surgeons as a rule found the Sisters easier to work with as they had been trained to obedience.⁶ In addition to their ability to carry out orders exactly, the Sisters had an informal nursing training. Nearly all the communities stemmed from a foreign foundation where the care of the sick through dispensaries, hospices, and visitation of the homes of the sick poor were ordinary services of every religious organization. These skills were passed from one generation to another in the same community. The Sisters of Providence, even though teachers, were by their Rule "expected to have a knowledge of the elements of pharmacy so as to render service when necessary." In the United States, a pharmacy or dispensary was set up in connection with every major foundation made by religious. Sisters in general had the experience of caring for one another when any of the multiform illnesses appeared. Consequently, they brought some preparation for this work with them, and in addition that zeal for cleanliness which is a characteristic of every religious, and a necessity for hospital work.

As one surgeon says of them, writing forty years after the war: "We should not think them particularly skilled at the present day, but they were very good for that day."⁷

Governor Morton Asks for Sisters of Providence

The early heavy toll of the battlefields and the military camps was heart-rending. Governor Morton, concerned for his men, appealed to Reverend Augustine Bessonies, pastor of St. John's Church, Indianapolis, to secure the services of the Sisters of Providence. Mother Mary Cecilia responded immediately, and went to Indianapolis to see what the conditions were and what was needed. Two days later, May 17, 1861, the Sisters of Providence took over the administration of the hospital service, being responsible for the supervision of the nursing of the sick and, with more Sisters, the general management. The City Hospital was at once called the Military Hospital.

The City Hospital Becomes the Military Hospital

The Indianapolis City Hospital had been completed as far as the outward structure was concerned in the spring of 1859 at a cost of thirty thousand dollars, but it was not fully furnished nor equipped. The City Council had halted proceedings on the hospital, and had made several attempts to sell it. Proposals by Catholic authorities to purchase it and turn it over to a religious community were defeated, but on July 21, 1860, it was granted to a Society of Ladies for a home for friendless women, and would probably have been eventually devoted to that purpose had it not been for the opening of the Civil War. An editorial in the Indianapolis *Daily Journal*, sums up the early history of the hospital:

Providence sometimes turns even our most foolish acts into real blessings, as it often confounds our wisest into follies. The City Hospital is a striking illustration. When it was commenced there was no need for it. By the time it was completed it was abandoned and lewd women and vagabonds turned it into a monstrous brothel. It seemed likely to turn out to be a nuisance so gross as to justify its destruction and make it necessary to spend a few hundred dollars to tear down what it cost \$30,000 to erect. But the war came and with it the gathering of forces and the accompanying evils and sickness. There were but very inadequate accommodations in the camp for the sick; none, in fact, at the time. The City Hospital seemed a special providence, sent in the very nick of time. It was exactly what was most needed. The frail, damp structures of the camp could protect the sick but little better than tents; and dry, clean, airy bed chambers that cure far better than medicine, were out of the question.

The breaking out of measles in the state encampment was the first demonstration of the necessity. The surgeons of that encampment, Drs. Jameson and Kitchen, speedily prepared for use and organized a hospital force, under the supervision of the Sisters of Providence of Terre Haute, who gave their invaluable services as those associations always do, without pay, purely in discharge of a higher duty.⁸

The editor continues his report, noting the contribution of the ladies of Indianapolis who brought blankets, towels, bed linen, and other necessary articles, and he pronounced the hospital in excellent running



THE CHAPEL OF 1863 AND THE MOTHERHOUSE OF 1853

Redrawn by Sister Ruth Johnson, S.P., from a steel engraving in the *Golden Jubilee Book* of 1890.

order, and the sick well taken care of in the short time — one month — since it had been opened. At the time of his visit, the average number of patients per day varied from one hundred as maximum to fifty as minimum, and the prevailing diseases were pneumonia, typhoid fever, and measles.

The Community Annals are brief and unrevealing in regard to the work done by the Sisters at the hospital, but the reminiscences of Sisters and friends add information.

The Sisters of Providence Assume Charge

The three Sister nurses who came on the first call, Sister Athanasius Fogarty, Sister Mary Rose O'Donaghue, and Sister Matilda Swimley, found the place destined to be the hospital in a state of incredible filth and disorder, and the fifty soldiers there in wretched condition. Sister Athanasius, a woman of practical decision, appealed directly to Governor Morton to send her six or seven men who knew dirt when they saw it, each man to be given a strong broom, a hoe or spade, a dozen or more sacks of quick lime, brushes for whitewashing the walls, rags and soap to wash windows, and disinfectants to cleanse the floors. Men were to be sent to dig trenches and bury or burn the refuse. All this was necessary before the hospital could be begun.

Immediate response was given by the Governor and the City. The first duty of the task workers was to carry out and burn the vermin laden mattresses. Any beds fit to use were disinfected, scrubbed, scalded, and every crevice filled with carbolic acid. The paper was torn from the walls, room after room was whitewashed, and the floors scraped and scalded. When a room was ready for occupancy, the wounded soldier underwent a vigorous process of cleansing as far as his condition would allow, and in a clean bed and clean garments, the grateful soldier began his convalescence.

Sister Athanasius asked also for men and women to run the laundry, and women to do the cooking. The Sisters had the work of supervision and the nursing of the sick⁷. Her personality was so remarkable that the success of the Military Hospital was often attributed to her, although she disclaimed the honor.

The *Indianapolis Daily Journal* and the reports of the surgeons pay tribute to the devoted service of the Sisters. Thousands of sick soldiers were cared for, the number never being fully reckoned. Forty to fifty

conversions were known to have taken place and many restless souls returned to their faith. No attempt was made to proselytize, but all the sick were urged to turn their thoughts to amendment of life, and to follow their religious convictions. Though the Sisters were never on the battlefield, they dealt with the aftermath of war: blood, wounds, disease, and pestilence.

Prisoners of war presented a new problem to the authorities. Prison barracks had been erected south of the depot, and soon the rough buildings housed thousands of men. The seriously ill prisoners were brought to the care of the Sisters in the Military Hospital, and sufficient protection afforded the nurses, so that no risk of injury or escape of prisoners would ensue. Sister Athanasius Fogarty, the best known of the Sister nurses, had permission to leave and re-enter the prison enclosure at any time. Camp Morton, the recruiting and training camp, was forced to build barracks and enclosures for Confederate prisoners who were coming in by large detachments. When some of the prisoners in the barracks in the prison camps, either Camps Morton or Car- ringford, fell ill, Sister Athanasius was allowed to visit them and minister to their needs. A dying soldier spoke to her as she stopped at his bedside:

“Sister, do you know we are rebels? See the gray uniform?”

“You are a wounded soldier, and a Christian, I hope.”

“What is a Christian, Sister?”

“One who believes in Christ, the Son of God. You believe in Him, don’t you?”

“Why — er — yes, — do you, Sister?”

“Of course I do.”

Then the faint voice answered, “If you do, I do, too.”

He did not know whether or not he had even been baptized, but said he wanted to be a Christian, and would be a “mighty good one” when he got out. Sister baptized him at once, and his slight hold on life relaxed, as he said, “Goodbye, good friend. I guess this is — the way — out?”

Incidents, pathetic and humorous, were so plentiful in the Sister nurses’ experience that while they were often recounted, they were seldom committed to written record by the nurses. For instance, the one which told of the Union soldier arrested for killing a goose. “I had to kill it,” he said, “it was a traitor, hissing at the United States flag, the penalty for treason is death.”¹⁰

Another account was a favorite one, often told by the Sisters: Father C — , while visiting the soldiers, came to the bed of a young man who was dying.

“Are you a Catholic?” asked the priest.

“No,” answered the young man, “but my mother was. She died when I was a child, but I think the Catholic religion is the best one.

“Do you wish to go to confession? I can hear you, if you do.”

“I do, indeed,” replied the sick man, “but I do not know how.”

“Do you know your prayers? The Our Father?”

“No, I know only one which my mother taught me and made me promise to repeat every day no matter where I might be. Sometimes I forget it and only think of it when we are on the march, but then I say it for my mother’s sake. It begins, ‘Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary,’ ” said the dying man.

A few hours later he was baptized and received the last sacraments of the Church . . . Mary remembered him in his last hours for the sake of the prayer said daily in memory of his earthly mother.¹¹

Sister Athanasius met the flatboats carrying the contagious cases among the Union men, and was never afraid to welcome the sick soldiers and dispense food or offer service to the disease-ridden. She kept a room at the entrance of the hospital, her “fumigation station,” she called it, and took every precaution not to carry contagion into the hospital itself.

Sister Athanasius Rescues a “Dead” Man

On one occasion when two loads of wounded and dead soldiers were brought to the hospital for treatment or burial, Sister Athanasius was superintending the removal of the dead bodies when she happened to notice a foot moving under the pile. She called the doctor’s attention to it, and they immediately got help. To their amazement, they discovered that the person who was thought to be dead was Dr. W. B. Fletcher. He was well known to them as the First Surgeon at the Military Hospital at Camp Morton. He had enlisted early in the war. As he was only little more than alive, the Sisters and doctors worked all night with him and by morning he was able to speak. Then he told them he had heard every word they had said and repeated their conversation, even the prayers they had said, but said he had been too weak to respond.

He never forgot Sister Athanasius and justly attributed the saving of his life to her. After the war, he often inquired about her, and years later when he learned that she was becoming incapacitated with rheumatism, he bought her the first wheelchair ever to be seen at St. Mary's.¹² Sister Athanasius was overjoyed when in 1887 she learned that a monument was to be erected in Indianapolis to the memory of the Indiana soldiers and sailors. She did not live to see its dedication on May 15, 1902, as she passed to her eternal reward on April 11, 1900.

Bigotry, too, added to the labors of the Sisters. Several times a week pamphlets and leaflets appeared at the bedside of the patients, detailing the evils of convent life, and playing up the Maria Monk stories. The Sisters made their rounds, quietly removing the offensive literature only to see it reappear in some mysterious fashion. Duties were too arduous and demanding for the Sisters to waste time investigating the source of this nuisance, and so nothing was done except to dispose of the material as soon as it was noticed¹³.

Father Bessonies was not only an excellent priest, but a very patriotic one as well. He did not enlist in the army or navy as he had his own congregation to care for, but he assumed the office of chaplain of the soldiers and the prisoners around Indianapolis. The clergy who enlisted as chaplains were not given military rank as they were later on, but they served the nation no less generously. At least fifty of the Indiana clergy cared for the spiritual wants of the soldiers, some at home, some in service. Father Bessonies celebrated Mass regularly in Camp Morton for the Catholic Confederate prisoners and administered the sacraments to the dying until permission to do so was refused. He appealed to Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of War, but his petition was rejected. He made a final appeal to Governor Morton who gave permission for him to attend the dying, but under guard.

Father Bessonies, a True Patriot

Father Bessonies rallied his people and pointed out their obligation to defend the country. Whenever a regiment left Indianapolis for the battlefield, Father Bessonies assembled the school children of St. John's on the street near the line of march, and encouraged them in waving flags, singing songs, and cheering the departing troops. Many a soldier, lonely at the thought of leaving his own family and concerned at his probable fate, must have been consoled by the eager children who prayed for him and wished him well.¹⁴

After the death of President Lincoln had shocked the country, preparations were made for his remains to lie in state in the Indianapolis State House as the funeral cortege moved westward to Springfield, Illinois, for the burial. Contemporary newspaper accounts of the day¹⁵ relate the arrival of the funeral party at seven o'clock in the morning by train, and the imposing procession from the station to the State House. Ten coal-black horses drew the draped hearse through ranks of army and navy men through hastily-erected arches and colonnades draped in black and white. The account estimated that a hundred and ten thousand people passed in review around the revered remains as they lay in state.

The school children of the city were allowed to pay their tribute of respect, and Father Bessonies was not slow in marshalling the First Communion class of St. John's to join the long line of reviewers.

Little Elizabeth Bloomer, afterwards Sister Celestine, a Sister of Providence, was one of the class. The event made so deep an impression on her that many decades later she told of the long lines of the military forces drawn up, the flashing of bayonets, the damp air which endangered the crisp white veils, and the walk through the arches draped in mourning to the south entrance of the Capitol. Her observing eyes noted the head of the President resting on a cushion embroidered with a wreath of white flowers. The mellow light from the chandeliers softened the strong features, and the muted music of the choir of voices, and the mournful roll of the drum in the city band added to the sadness of the occasion.¹⁶

There were no complaints ever made by the Hospital Sisters about the hardships of their life, but a letter in the Indianapolis *Sentinel*¹⁷ signed "L.D." pointed out the difficulty that attended them when turn by turn they had to make their way to St. John's Church for their religious duties. A walk of more than a mile through mud often knee-deep was a daily hardship. The writer asked that a conveyance be provided for the Sisters. This request seems not to have been met as Sister Mary Ambrose, superior of St. John's, borrowed a horse and buggy several evenings a week, and brought one Sister at a time to spend the night at St. John's so that she might attend Mass at least once a week, while one Sister as substitute replaced her overnight at the hospital.

Whenever Mother Mary Cecilia visited Indianapolis she went to see the Sisters at the hospital. She was not permitted to go to the prison

camp in order to see what the Sisters were doing there, but she did call at the hospital to console them and to give them courage. She was happy to find that Sister Mary Ambrose was so very attentive to the Sister nurses, but at the same time she did not hesitate to express her views to one of the young Sisters who seemed to have picked up a teasing way of speaking about the work in the hospital. It is not at all clear what the remarks could have been, but they were evidently capable of misinterpretation, and so Mother Mary Cecilia called the attention of the young Sister to her lack of charity in not being kinder to the nurses when they stopped at St. John's. She mentioned also that some of them were not anxious to stop at the convent because they could not understand why their work would be the subject of teasing. In a few peremptory remarks, Mother Mary Cecilia checked the annoyance once and for all and the comments ceased.¹⁸ Sister Mary Joseph le Fer, too, was a frequent visitor. Many of the stories about the convents have been preserved in her letters.

Various methods of practicing economy and of reducing waste of money and supplies were inaugurated by the Sisters and carried through by their management. The employment of convalescent soldiers in light duties, copying lists, lettering, or yard work, exercised a kind of therapy which brought excellent results. The supervising of the women who did the laundry work at the hospital instead of sending the linen to outside laundries meant a considerable saving of money. The hospital laundry washed and ironed at least a thousand pieces of clothing a week, and five hundred bed sheets were the minimum put through each week.¹⁹

The reverent and tender care extended to the patients who died in the hospital was a source of consolation to the families of the deceased. The Indianapolis *Daily Journal* thus described the mortuary:

The dead rooms have been recently beautifully arranged by the Sisters of Providence. They are hung with white muslin, festooned with black crepe, and at the head of each room is the United States flag, also draped in mourning. At the other end of the room are beautiful pen designs, executed by an inmate of the hospital, with the words: "For Their Country, They Died. They are Dead, but We Forget Them Not"; and appropriate passages of Scripture.²⁰

Drs. Kitchen and Jameson, even in their first report,²¹ were most appreciative of the "noble and self-sacrificing efforts of those meek

and worthy women — the Sisters of Providence, who gave their services without recompense." The Sisters associated with the Military Hospital²² were: Sister Athanasius Fogarty, Sister Eugenia Gorman, Sister Mary Frances Guthneck, Sister Mary Rose O'Donaghue, and Sister Matilda Swimley.

The Sisters who served the Military Hospital in Indianapolis and the emergency hospital in Vincennes have all been honored by the War Department in Washington, D.C. Sister Mary Rose O'Donaghue, Sister St. Felix Buchanan, Sister Sophie Glenn, Sister Athanasius Fogarty, Sister Eugenia Gorman, Sister Mary Frances Guthneck, Sister Matilda Swimley, Sister Frances Ann Carney, Sister Henrietta McKenzie, Sister Mary Louise Maloney, and Sister Helena Burns are the illustrious names of those who devoted themselves to the service of the soldiers. The first seven are honored by special tombstones in the convent cemetery, bearing the inscription, "Army Nurse." The last four named assisted by managing the household duties and contributed to the smooth running of the hospitals.

Other Hospital Ventures

The Military Hospital in Indianapolis was not the only venture of the Sisters of Providence into hospital work. Bishop de Saint-Palais had offered the services of the Sisters to nurse the soldiers. On September 5, 1860, the Bishop had put at the disposal of the Sisters the building in Vincennes formerly known as "The College." This building had met a variety of needs. In succession it had been St. Gabriel's College, a male orphan asylum, and a seminary. The transfer of the seminarians to another building left the old college vacant. The Bishop offered the building to the Sisters to use as a hospital or as an academy. The hospital plan seemed to be a better idea, and Dr. Baty was considered as a possible head. However, there were drawbacks which seemed insurmountable, the problem of support in a small town being the most formidable. Then Bishop de Saint-Palais offered the building to the state as a temporary hospital, and on July 15, 1861, he wrote asking for two Sisters to take charge of the sick soldiers that were being brought in. Sister St. Felix Buchanan and Sister Sophie Glenn were sent. The hospital was in use only for three months at that time, but the work required of the Sisters was exhausting. The hospital had many cases of particularly virulent contagious diseases. An epidemic broke out

among the new recruits and the contagion created a panic so city-wide that only with the greatest difficulty could supplies be obtained. Those who brought provisions came at night and left what they brought outside the hospital. The hired help fled at the approach of danger, leaving the Sisters alone to care for the stricken. The lives of the Sisters were threatened by patients suffering from feverish delirium as well as by the risk of the epidemic. The Sisters, however, remained at their post, washing linen at night, and cutting wood for the fires. Finally, the doctors got an old man to cut the wood and bring in water. After the first terror subsided, the people of Vincennes ventured to the relief of the Sisters.²³

In response to the Governor's war speech following the attack on Fort Sumter, the State Legislature voted one million dollars for arms and munitions, and the necessary organization for the emergency.⁵

By the end of August, 1861, the initial recruiting in Vincennes was finished, and the soldiers were on their way to war. The Vincennes hospital was closed, but was reopened for a short time on May 29, 1862. The two Sisters who had been in charge of the hospital until its closing in August, 1861, had been transferred to the orphanage in Vincennes. Bishop de Saint-Palais appointed them to the care of the reopened building without consulting Mother Mary Cecilia, but informed her that since the Sisters had been sent to Vincennes for the hospital, he took it for granted that they could once more be employed in the same duty. No objection was made by Mother or the Council, and the hospital remained open for a few months until the emergency passed. The sick of the 19th Illinois Regiment were cared for at this hospital as well as Indiana soldiers²⁴. Then that work of mercy in Vincennes terminated as it was no longer needed.

Colonel Noble of the Indiana Volunteer Regiments asked for two Sisters to open a temporary hospital in Terre Haute²⁵. Mother Mary Cecilia promised two Sisters at the close of school in June. This plan did not materialize because of some prejudice against using the Sisters, a feeling springing up from time to time in Terre Haute, and the project was abandoned by the military authorities.

On December 8, 1861, another request came from Evansville for three or four Sisters to take charge of a general and military hospital about to be established in that city. Mother Mary Cecilia went to see Dr. Pennington who had been appointed surgeon, and who had already spoken to Sister Alphonse, superior in Evansville. Dr. Pennington said

that the hospital would not be respectable from a moral point of view unless it had Sisters in charge. Certain delays intervened so that it was not until December 22 that an interview was arranged with Dr. Pennington. Mother Mary Cecilia felt that the Community could not undertake the charge of the hospital under the projected plan. The regulations stipulated one matron for every thirty soldiers. The matrons were to be under the direction of the Sisters, a difficult thing as many of the women were married and were non-Catholic. Secondly, the hospital in all its departments of housekeeping was to be under the entire control of the steward to whom the Sisters would be responsible and be subject to his surveillance. To have it thus seemed impossible, as authority was divided and unorganized. Mother Mary Cecilia expressed herself thus, but promised to speak to the Bishop. She stopped at Vincennes to see Bishop de Saint-Palais, and he unhesitatingly said that he would not permit the Sisters to work under such conditions²⁶. The hospital arrangements were just being drawn up, and the withdrawal of the Sisters did not affect the patients as there were none there at that time. The hospital was put under the care of a secular staff, following the system established by Florence Nightingale.

Soon after this, an invitation came from the commander at Gosport, Owen County, Indiana, where there were a number of sick soldiers of the Indiana Volunteer Regiments. Mother Mary Cecilia decided to send three Sisters, and although there was no church there, the Bishop promised to send a priest as chaplain. The call came on February 2, 1862, but before the Sisters could get there, the regiments were ordered into action in the Fort Henry and Donelson campaign. There was no need for the hospital as all soldiers, sick or well, went on to the battlefield²⁷.

The Sisters of Providence were hard pressed to meet all the demands on them. Sixteen schools and the Institute, and two orphan asylums were under the care of the Sisters, and not until August 15, 1863, did the number of professed Sisters reach one hundred. Cannelton and Columbus, Indiana, which had small enrollments, were closed temporarily, and the number of Sisters on other missions was reduced whenever possible.

St. John's Home for Invalids

The Military Hospital operated until the end of the Civil War. Their success urged the Sisters to continue some form of this benevolent

work. Accordingly, during the retreat of 1865, the Sisters decided to begin an infirmary in Indianapolis where the sick veterans could be cared for, and from which the Sisters could visit the poor in their homes. Sister Athanasius and Sister Mary Louise Maloney were appointed for this work.

Father Bessonies came at the end of the retreat to be sure that some Sisters were named for the contemplated infirmary. He was delighted and the Sisters had every reason to hope that he was going to provide a properly furnished house and the means for its support. He looked for a house and engaged one at forty-one dollars a month, giving the Sisters one hundred and fifty dollars which was at his command, but not withdrawn from the parish funds. He then turned over the responsibility to the Sisters and disclaimed any further obligation. The Community, although feeling that these resources were inadequate, did not think it could give up the project. On September 8, 1865, the Sisters took possession and opened the infirmary. During the first week, five invalids entered, two dying shortly after.

Toward the end of September, Mother Mary Cecilia went to inspect the new establishment. The Sisters occupied one-half of the house. The building had been used by the Government during the war as a visitors' home to lodge the relatives of the soldiers when they came to see them. The Government had vacated the part of the house the Sisters had rented and was soon to vacate the other half. The rented portion was not large enough for the purpose of the infirmary and the rent of the entire building would amount to a thousand dollars a year. After serious deliberation, the Sisters decided against renting the whole house as the revenue was an unknown factor at the beginning stage and the annual rent would be a dead loss.

The search for a suitable house was begun, and a good-sized frame house or a large lot closer to the church was selected as desirable. The owner was willing to sell, and although the house was in need of repair, the purchase was concluded. It cost seven thousand dollars — three thousand dollars down and four thousand dollars on a note at interest payable in one year. Although the price seemed high to them, the ownership would give them security to begin work, to support themselves by revenue collected from paying invalids, and the opportunity to harbor at their own expense the indigent sick with the vicinity. Much debate centered on a name for the new house, and finally the choice fell on St. John's Home for Invalids²⁸.

The Sisters received some help from the parish to the amount of three hundred dollars after a lecture by Father Kilroy for the benefit of the Infirmary. It was intimated in the sermon that goods, furniture, market provisions — all would be gratefully received. The Home was located at 125 S. Tennessee Street (now Capitol Avenue). The terms were normal for those times — eight dollars a week during the winter season. Invalids were allowed to call their own physician. Under the auspices of the Holy Family²⁹, the Sisters of Providence opened St. John's Home on October 10, 1865. It functioned until 1871 when other hospital facilities in the city were available. The number of veteran invalids had decreased to so few that it was not considered advisable to maintain the Home any longer.

Thus concluded the early experiences of the Sisters of Providence in hospital work. A few years later, new enterprises in this field were to be considered.

NOTES — CHAPTER V

1. July 30, 1859.
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3. Albert Sonderman, "Historical Sketch of the Ferdinand Negro Settlement in Southwestern Indiana," *Ferdinand News*, (Ferdinand, Indiana, May 25, 1956) p. 8.
4. Sulgrave, *History of Indianapolis and Marion County*, (Philadelphia: L. H. Everts and Company, 1884), p. 317.
5. William Dudley Foulke, *Life of Oliver P. Morton*, 2 vols. (Indianapolis: Bowen-Merrill, 1899), I, 119-146, *passim*.
Cf. Jacob Piatt Dunn, Jr., Indiana: *A Redemption from Slavery*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1905), p. 477.
6. George W. Adams, *Doctors in Blue*, (New York, N.Y.: H. Schuman, 1952), pp. 176, 183.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 184.
8. June 18, 1868.
9. Reminiscences of Sister Athanasius as told to Mrs. Craigie Gunn Mitchell. Typescript. S.M.W.A.
10. *Ibid.*
11. Sister Mary Joseph à Mme. Parmentier, 24 janvier, 1862. S.M.W.A.
12. Notes by Sister Mary Theodosia Mug. S.M.W.A.
13. Sister Mary Joseph à Mme. Parmentier, 24 janvier, 1862. S.M.W.A.
14. Diamond Jubilee Booklet, St. John Academy, Indianapolis, May 11-12, 1934.
15. The Indianapolis *Daily Journal*, May 1, 1865.
16. Sister Celestine Bloomer, Oral reminiscences to Sister Eugenia Logan, 1935.

17. Indianapolis *Sentinel*, February 25, 1862.
18. Letter of Mother Mary Cecilia to Sister Mary John Hetfield, July 12, 1861, S.M.W.A.
19. Indianapolis *Daily Journal*, June 11, 1864.
20. *Ibid.*
21. August 24, 1861.
22. Obedience Lists, 1861 to 1865. S.M.W.A.
23. Rev. John F. McShane, *The Hand of Providence* (Indianapolis: Brigitte Press, 1949), p. 24.
24. National Archives of the United States: *Indiana Hospital Records of the Civil War*.
25. Sister Mary Theodosia Mug, *Lest We Forget* (St. Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana: Providence Press, 1931), pp. 61-65. This is a compilation of all newspaper items and letters concerning the hospital work of the Sisters of Providence.
26. Community Diary, December 19 and 21, 1861. S.M.W.A.
27. The first and only Catholic Church established in Owen County was opened in Spencer, Indiana, in 1951.
28. Mother Mary Cecilia's Record.
29. Book of the Foundations, p. 21.

CHAPTER VI

Transfer of the Remains of Mother Theodore to New Cemetery

Saint Rose, Vincennes, Named at Last — 1864

The January weather of 1864 was mild enough to encourage the carrying out of a project which the Sisters had had in mind for some time — the transfer to the new cemetery of the remains of Mother Theodore and the few Sisters buried on St. Anne's Knoll. Rough preparations had been made in 1861 to allow the interment of Sister Seraphine Jennings, and also for the removal of the coffins of Père Michel Guthneck and Margaret Mullen, a postulant, who had died during Mother Theodore's time. These two graves were directly in the way of the new entrance path to the cemetery. When the coffins were disinterred, that of Père Michel was taken to the village cemetery, and that of Margaret Mullen buried in the new convent cemetery. At that time, 1861, it was thought too soon to make further exhumations, but now that eight years had passed since Mother Theodore's death, it was thought to be safe and suitable to proceed with the proposed transfer.

On Wednesday, January 13, 1864, five graves were dug, and the remains of Sister St. Francis LeFer, Sister Mary Liguori Tiercin, Sister Seraphine Carroll, Sister Angelina Connery, and Sister Josephine Monaghan were buried with the prescribed religious ceremony. The chaplain, Father Corbe, blessed the graves and offered the prayers for the dead. The work was completed about four o'clock in the afternoon and the Sisters returned in procession to the chapel while the workmen filled in the graves.

The greater part of the next day, the fourteenth, the workmen spent in preparing a brick vault in the spot selected for Mother Theodore's tomb. There was no need of the formality of further identification of the previous location of her grave as it had been marked by the white wooden cross with the Latin inscription, "Ego dormio, sed cor meum vigilat super hanc domum quam aedificavi," more often quoted in the translation, "I sleep, but my heart watches over this house which I have built." Her coffin was raised from the ground at about three o'clock in the afternoon, the time the Sisters had been notified to

assemble. The coffin was placed upon trestles and the upper part of the cover laid back. The Sisters who wished to do so were allowed to view the remains, but the work of decomposition had effaced all traces of resemblance. Nothing was touched, and nothing removed. The coffin was then closed and borne to the place of burial followed by the Sisters, a number of whom had been present at the burial in 1856, among them Mother Mary Cecilia, Sister Mary Joseph, and Sister Olympiade who had helped to carry the coffin to the grave.¹ Father Corbe, who had given one of the last absolutions at her funeral, carried out the full ceremonial in the profound silence that the melancholy event warranted.²

Mother Theodore's Second Tomb

A circular central plot had been set aside, and the circle gave the tomb a conspicuous position in the exact center of the cemetery. The white cross which had formerly marked the grave was placed again at the head with the identifying name, dates, and inscription,³ and a medallion showing a view of St. Mary-of-the-Woods. There were only a few graves then in the cemetery, but in the course of the years, more than twelve hundred Sisters were to find their last resting-place there.

The pleasant but unseasonal January weather did not last very long, and by February the extreme cold weather had set in, so much so that Mother Mary Cecilia, who had gone to Terre Haute to settle accounts with Mr. Burget for the building of the chapel, found herself weather-bound for five days. New problems presented themselves daily: tax demands in Lafayette and Indianapolis, the purchase of more lumber, and a suit brought against the Sisters by Davis, a disgruntled workman, which necessitated the Sisters' appearing in court. The suit was settled in favor of the Sisters, as the evidence on the opposing side was easily disproved.

Early in May, an opportunity came to purchase twenty-five acres of land north of the railroad and adjoining the Community property on the west. The deed was executed in the office of Attorney H. D. Scott, acting for Mrs. Ann Rice, the owner, and Mother Mary Cecilia, accompanied by Sister Basilide, signing for the Sisters of Providence. The next day, Mrs. Rice called at the motherhouse. Mother Mary Cecilia paid her the \$2,200 purchase price and took immediate possession of the property.⁴

St. Rose, Vincennes

When Mother Mary Cecilia began her administration, she viewed with favor the establishments in operation at Vincennes because they represented activity in charitable as well as in educational endeavor.⁵

The Sisters of Providence had followed, in 1843, two other communities, the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, Kentucky, and the Sisters of Charity of Emmitsburg, Maryland, both of which had been teaching in Vincennes with no permanent foundation in Indiana. The latter religious group, especially, had remained in Vincennes on condition that it might withdraw as soon as Bishop Bruté could secure a religious community to establish a motherhouse in Indiana.

Bishop de la Hailanière, his successor, had taken over the convent and school on his own initiative while Mother Theodore was in France on her begging mission. He termed it "the Bishop's Establishment," but it was variously known as "the Sisters' School," "St. Mary's," and even as "The Female School of the Sisters of Providence."

During Bishop de Saint-Palais' administration, Mother Theodore assumed charge of an orphan asylum for boys and one for girls, giving the services of the Sisters gratis. There was also a free school attached to the Female academy. The academy was opened on a progressive level, as the course of studies offered included French, English, history, religion, music and drawing. At times, the Sisters conducted night classes for the benefit of adult women who needed extra instruction to qualify for licenses to teach in the district schools.

Purposeful Shifting of Students

It would be difficult to detail accurately all the changes of location that took place during the early years of these foundations, but the important material covering these schools before 1856 has been well discussed in the first volume of this history.⁶ In the late fifties, the old seminary on Second and Church Street housed the Sisters and the young orphan girls in one building, and the high school in the other. The whole plant consisted of a two-story brick house and an adjoining frame house. A small chapel, built in 1847 by Bishop de la Hailanière was joined to the brick building on Second Street. This chapel was dedicated to St. Rose of Lima to whom the Bishop manifested special devotion.

The orphan boys, under the care of the Sisters, occupied the old St. Gabriel College building, but the name had been changed to St. Vincent's.⁷ The seminarians were living at Highland, about three miles out of Vincennes, in the house which Bishop de la Hailandière had built and to which he had hoped to retire after his resignation from office. Bishop de Saint-Palais had transferred the sixteen seminarians there and named the seminary in honor of St. Charles Borromeo.⁸

By 1860, St. Meinrad Abbey, under Abbot Martin, opened a school which had as its objective minor and major seminary education for native religious and diocesan clergy. Since a new building was now erected at St. Meinrad's Bishop de Saint-Palais transferred the seminarians from Highland to the Abbey.⁹

This move left the seminary building at Highland empty, but the Bishop, mindful of his orphan boys, placed them at Highland. On the three hundred-acre farm, he hoped that they might learn something about farming in addition to their regular education. The Sisters of Providence were still in charge of the orphan boys and the name of "St. Vincent's" accompanied the transfer of the orphanage. The quarters were not yet large enough, and in 1862 the Bishop erected an additional building.

About 1860, the Bishop had approached Mother Mary Cecilia with the request that she establish in Vincennes a secondary school, that is, one with moderate charge for board and tuition, and less pretentious than an academy. Useful instruction was to be given combined with practice in sewing, cooking, and household work. His intention was to prepare girls for their own homes, especially those whose circumstances would not permit household help, or who might have to work before marrying. He was greatly concerned with the problem of placing girls in service who were poorly prepared for household work. The Bishop offered to take the school at his own expense and profit to protect the Community from loss if it should result in loss; but if it should be successful and profitable, he would resign it to the Sisters if they desired. Father Corbe felt, and the Sisters agreed, that such a school would not succeed in a country where equality was so much stressed, but the Bishop's conditions were so generous and his desires so obvious that Mother Mary Cecilia and the Councilors felt they could not refuse. The Bishop was notified that the Community would begin the school the following year, but that it should not be called "secondary" lest that word would diminish the consideration it should have.

Some suitable name should be selected and applied to it.

The project was not carried through at this particular time, as the outbreak of the Civil War in the spring of 1861 caused the Bishop to postpone his plan.¹⁰

By 1863 the number of orphan girls had increased as a consequence of the loss of parents during the war, and the ravages of cholera which appeared almost annually. The asylum on Second and Church was too small to house all the girls, and the Bishop saw an opportunity to use the college building, spacious enough to accommodate a large household. The establishment near the Cathedral was left to the orphan girls under ten years of age. The Sisters and older orphan girls were to live in the college building, which was now to be opened to boarding students who were interested in household work, and the long-established high school remained in the building on Second and Church. The boarding students project was carried through as evidenced by the following announcement in *The Weekly Vincennes Western Sun* of September 10, 1864:

SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE — FEMALE SCHOOL

It is with pleasure that we announce that the building formerly occupied by the Female Orphan Asylum in this city on Church Street, having been vacated, the Sisters of Providence have decided to open in it [another] high school for young ladies. They are well known as competent to teach the different branches usually required, and having devoted their lives to this object, none can surpass them in giving to children that peculiar training which is so essential a part of female education. They know how to exact of their pupils a proper obedience, and being at the same time gentle, know how to win their affection. No parents can trust their children into safer hands.

The building being large and commodious, the Sisters will also receive boarders. There are many parents desirous of giving a good, plain education to their daughters, including all the useful female arts, but the expense in large establishments of an educational character deters them. The boarding school opened to this city by the Sisters is will be \$100 in currency with \$10 entrance fee.

A further announcement appeared in *The Vincennes Times* of September 8, 1866:

ST. ROSE'S — BOARDING SCHOOL

Under the direction of the Sisters of Providence, Vincennes, Indiana. Situated on Church Street, between 2d & 3d.

The year consists of one session, comprising ten months, from the 1st of September to the 30th of June.

Terms, per session (in advance) \$125.00

The Sisters will also have as usual a high school for the accommodation of day scholars.

Terms, per day scholars (in advance)

1st Class \$3.00

2nd Class \$6.00

For further information address

Sister Superior of St. Rose's School
Vincennes, Indiana

Mother Mary Cecilia's record carries two items of interest concerning the new school:

I go to Vincennes, Sept. 1st. I have some business in each establishment there, but I go more particularly to see about opening the establishment of St. Rose and about the German school to be started.¹¹

In the margin on the same page is written: "The mission of St. Rose is accepted."

Thus St. Rose, emerging from the anonymity that had shrouded its efforts since 1843, became "our chief educational house in Vincennes."¹² The mission, "St. Rose Academy, Vincennes" appears on the Obedience List for the first time in 1864. The first year in which the name "St. Rose" appears in the yearbook of the institutions of the Diocese of Vincennes is 1865. It is listed as follows:

St. Rose's Boarding School at Vincennes.

Sister Austin (Sister of Providence), Superior.¹³

In the directory for 1868, the name appears as follows:

St. Rose's Boarding School and Educational
Establishment, Vincennes.

Sister Mary Ephrem, Superioreess.¹⁴

The boarders lived at St. Rose, as also did the one Sister appointed to teach at the German school. Sister Austin Graham was named

Superior, Sister Bonaventure Neubauer for the German School, Sister Mary Angèle O'Donald, and two novices, Sister Eulalie Jocquel and Sister Mary Etienne Kane. They remained at the girls' asylum for several days until they could fit up the new establishment with required furniture. The Sisters bought only what was absolutely necessary and on credit at the extravagant war prices. They took possession of the house on August 25, 1864, but it was some time before they could open classes, as much had to be done. Two weeks later, Mother Mary Cecilia visited the convent and found three boarders enrolled.

Unexpected complications arose as Reverend Ernest Audran expressed his disappointment that no Sister had been named for the small boys of the parish. Mother Mary Cecilia felt that the Sisters would have as much as they could do to take care of their new venture. She did not want to put this burden on them, but Father Audran might ask the Sisters how they felt about it. The local superior, who was present at the interview, agreed without much persuasion to try to find time to teach the boys whose classes were held in the basement of the Cathedral library. One Sister from the orphanage had helped with the teaching in the free school. The devoted Sisters now had four different classes of activity — a high school, a public school, a German school, and a boys' school. They were five only in number, and one was designated exclusively for work. However, adjustments could always be made. The Obedience List for 1864 gives the following names:

St. Mary's Asylum — Sister St. Felix Buchanan, Sister Melanie Cambron, Sister Arsenia McGuinea, Sister Dorothy Burns, Sister John Francis O'Donaghue

St. Vincent's Asylum — Sister Joachim Bodin, Sister Agnes Dukent, Sister Monique Tiennoux, Sister St. Paul Worland, Sister Patrick Devereaux, Sister Johanna Cawley, Sister St. Antoine Hermann, Sister Rosalie Flynn

St. Rose — Sister Austin Graham, Sister Bonaventure Neubauer, Sister Mary Angèle O'Donald, Sister Eulalie Jocquel, Sister Mary Etienne Kane

Additional Teachers Pressed into Service

With eighteen Sisters available in the vicinity, the situation seemed well under control. A little later the St. Mary's Asylum became known as St. Ann's in order to differentiate still further from St. Rose.

From a human standpoint, the Superiors of the Community, approving the new type of education in theory, were dubious of its success and would never have started a school on the plan of St. Rose if the Bishop had not taken the responsibility of it himself. The terms of board and tuition were agreed upon, and the order of the day, regulated between study and work, was put upon a trial basis. The school continued and flourished.

Bishop de Saint-Palais must have had devotion to St. Rose of Lima, and in stipulating that the new mission be called "St. Rose," he succeeded in uniting all the advanced work done in Vincennes under the one name. This was not the first church of this name in the diocese, for the early almanacs give the name of St. Rose de Lima Church at Faux Chenel, near Vincennes, where Mass was said on designated Sundays by curates from the Cathedral.

The following incident probably refers to the seminary chapel of St. Rose. When Bishop de Saint-Palais, during his *ad limina* visit to Rome in 1851-52, spent some months in France, he invited his good friend, the Abbé Azais, to return with him to Indiana. "Come with me," the Bishop entreated. "I have near Vincennes a little post which bears a charming name and which is made for you; it is Saint Rose of Lima. You will occupy it without any care of curates or any trouble of building. And every day you will be able to take your meals at the episcopal residence where your friend will be happy to receive you."¹⁵

Charmed as he was by the offer, the Abbé could not leave his own duty, but he soliloquized a little in dismissing the thought. "Dear church of Saint Rose! You have had, I have no doubt of it, a pastor much more devoted than the one your bishop wished to give you. But I cannot help feeling a sincere regret at having let slip by this happy occasion of going, as a modest worker, to glean some grain in this great harvest field of Indiana!"¹⁶

No longer was the name "St. Mary's Female School" heard. "St. Rose" took its place in the hearts of the Vincennes people. In the interval between 1864 and 1876, St. Rose had reached a high educational level, the old prejudice held by the parents against allowing their children to attend school "at the orphan asylum" had disappeared when the orphans were moved to Terre Haute in 1876, and the first Rose of the Community establishments came to its full maturity.

The incidence of "Rose" in the religious names of the many Sisters

from this school shows the loving devotion of its students to their alma mater.

News of Saint Mary's during the War

Although the final issue of the Civil War was forecast by the battle of Gettysburg and the success of the western campaign under Grant, the end was slow in coming. Saint Mary's Institute had a pronounced increase in attendance during the war years, and numbered many girls from the southern and border states. Students of the sixties were not accustomed to luxurious living either at home or in school. Plain living and high thinking were the order of the time, and the privations of war were not considered too heavy. News filtered through in letters from home, and the forces on both sides of the struggle had representatives from many of the families. The girls followed the fortunes of war prayerfully and hopefully. Jennie Buell,¹⁷ of Lawrenceburg, Indiana, a recent convert, kept her friends informed of the exploits of her dashing cousin, General Don Carlos Buell, in the Kentucky engagements. Other girls there were who had news of brothers, fathers, and cousins wounded in battle, and of families threatened by great property losses.

The students' diet did not show too great a deterioration as the motto always was, "Students first, Sisters afterwards." Milk was available on account of the extensive pasture land opened to the large herd of cows, homegrown vegetables were plentiful, and a good supply of bread and buns possible, but no cakes, jam or jelly, because of the scarcity of sugar. Coffee had always been a rare item on convent and academy menus because of its high import tax, but now the blockades of the ports had cut off all possibility of supply.

"Long ago," wrote Sister Mary Joseph to her mother, "we said goodbye to tea and coffee which are very highly taxed. We still have a little coffee which, mixed with carrots and parsnips ground and roasted, is as much to my taste as the real article. . . . Nearly everyone is obliged to be satisfied with buckwheat coffee. Monseigneur de Saint-Palais who was here last week told us that when Jeanne, his cook, came to tell him that there was no more tea, he replied, 'Very well, give me some Lincoln coffee.' That is what they call the buckwheat coffee because President Lincoln's election is said to have brought about the privations of the war."¹⁸

Attempts were made to lighten the gloom of war. Some outside diversions were planned.

The Academy girls, numbering about 150, and some of the Sisters visited Vincennes in a special train for a May party. Great day for Vincennes! Monseigneur de Saint-Palais, Fathers O'Connor and Mougin went to Queen's Hall for the crowning of the May Queen, to hear the music and to see a kind of comedy.¹⁹

Mother Mary Cecilia adds further items. There were twelve Sisters in the party. The group left by train at five in the morning and returned at nine o'clock that night.²⁰

As conditions improved, the Christmas vacation of 1864 was extended to two weeks, from the Thursday before Christmas to the Thursday after New Year's; and on the 23rd of February, 1865, the students had a dance to celebrate their entrance into the new wing of the Institute. A Terre Haute band played for the occasion,²¹ and doubtless the girls who took the part of escorts wore the diamond-shaped band on the sleeve.

One of the consoling events of the Christmas holidays was the conversion of Mr. Koch, one of the workmen. He had been a Lutheran, but had come into the Church, and on Christmas morning, Sister Rose Ann, his daughter, had the happiness of walking with her father to the Holy Table and receiving Holy Communion with him.²²

On Good Friday, 1865, the news of the assassination of Lincoln was flashed around the world, and the next day brought the news of his death. Sister Anastasie, then superior of the Institute, came into the study hall where the students were assembled for the Saturday study period. She made the announcement of the President's death, and asked for prayers for him and for the welfare of the country. She left the room and had gone but a short distance down the hall, when she heard the rebel yell sounding in the study hall. She retraced her steps, and her expression as she faced the girls brought on a quiet so intense that it was painful. On her second withdrawal, there was no sound, but the southern spirit had evidently not surrendered at Appomattox, even if the great General Lee had done so in his submission to the inevitable.

Mother's Circular Hints at Change

Mother Mary Cecilia's circulars were always exhortations to charity and contained salutary reflections for the consideration of the Sisters and their improvement. The circular announcing the triennial elections

to be held in August, 1865, specified the prayers to be said for that intention, and also made some observations on the value of change in superiors. She presented viewpoints that no doubt were present in the minds of some religious, but did not necessarily reflect the opinions of all.

As some of you would prefer to have no change in the person of the first superior, I will take this occasion to make to you my observations on the subject. Serious reflection prompts me to say that it may be advisable to name a new Superior; the Rule requires it, and the reasons that favor it must be the foundation on which the Rule is built. The effect produced by change is good, and even necessary in cases like the one before us; a new management, a new turn of things, new ways, and a new tone of words, give a spur to a whole circle of actions, labors and manner of living that constitute a whole Community world; . . . a change inspires a new spirit and renovates by new impressions, all of which are favorable to maintain in vigor the combined life of society. We are so constituted that we are pleased with what breaks sameness. A change from the usual mode attracts attention, and inclines the will to compliance by the force of a certain power which newly existing things have to impose and to command submission.

Having always the one person in the same position, seeing a continuity in manner of address, and hearing always the same style of language, are apt to depreciate if prolonged beyond a due time. Add to this the unavoidable perception of the failings and defects of a superior which become more and more evident the longer she remains in office. This as a natural consequence reflects on her authority, and must lessen its weight on those whom she governs. I conceive that these may be some of the reasons that have suggested the propriety of changing superiors at regular return of years, a usage observed in most communities.²³

Despite this open invitation to change, the Chapter which assembled on August 7, 1865, and which was presided over by the Most Reverend Bishop, Father Corbe, and Father Van Bieck, S.J., returned the same superiors to office. At the opening of the Chapter, a petition for a dispensation for another three years for Mother Mary Cecilia was presented by the previous Council, and granted by the Bishop.

The report of the temporal affairs of the Community showed that it owed money, not for running expenses of the Community, but that

borrowed money had not been fully paid back; the building had not been entirely paid for, and that a debt contracted by the mission house of Lafayette had to be assumed by the Community. The assets of the Community were good, and the income from the boarding school and the contributions from the missions which might be expected during the coming year were enough to offset the necessary indebtedness.

Mother Mary Cecilia had worked very hard for the Community. She showed sound business judgment and inspired confidence in the persons who dealt with her. In her nine years of superiorship, she had built the chapel of 1863 which had relieved the congestion in the summer, and had erected a two-story wing on to the east side of Providence which provided a scullery, kitchen, men's refectory, and economie's office on the first floor; and on the second, quarters for the Mistress of Novices, the novices, and gave space for a large bedroom for a few elderly Sisters.

Saint Cecilia's Feast

As far as the Institute was concerned, the building went on slowly but steadily, and the two wings which surrounded the original academy of 1841 were completed on the exterior, but not completely habitable on the north side. As Mother Mary Cecilia's feast was always celebrated with as much dignity as possible, the placing of the statues of the Angel Guardian and St. Cecilia on the south end of each of the wings was planned for November 22.

Much deliberation went into the choice of material for the outdoor statues. Marble, copper, or bronze would have been ideal, but the expense was prohibitive. Stone was rejected also because of its brittleness, as repair work would be impossible, and also because of its tendency to weather stains. Wood was finally agreed upon as the best material. It was durable, easy to carve, and possible to repair, as any damage could be covered by a coat of paint. Best of all, the cost was within the reach of the Community — two hundred dollars in gold and seventy-five dollars in currency.²⁴

Reverend Charles Van Goch, S.J., recommended an artist in Chicago, a Mr. Anthony Brutscher, who agreed to do the work according to the designs submitted by the Sisters. All sorts of ideas and designs found their way to drawing paper and into clay models, and the anonymous Sister whose design was accepted said she had invoked

Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque, beatified the previous year (1864) by Pope Pius IX, to help her.

The statues were completed early in the fall and were placed on exhibition on November 21 at Providence. The next day, Sisters, students, and a few friends, singing the Litany of Loretto, made up the triumphal procession after the blessing of the statues, and conveyed them across the wooden bridge over the ravine to the front of the Institute. They were placed in position by the men who were working on the building under the direction of the father of one of the students who was engaged in the raising and placing of statues. The operation took a number of hours. Saint Cecilia was placed on the east wing as the music rooms were located in that area, and the Angel Guardian on the west wing to protect the dormitories of the children.²⁵

The singing of the Te Deum in English concluded the musical offerings. Several volleys were fired from guns, and the memorable ceremony was over. On Mother's feast as on Christmas, Easter, and Assumption, the Academy Sisters came to Providence for dinner. From the time Mother Mary Cecilia took office, the Academy was a separate mission, and special permission was required to cross the bridge to the motherhouse.

Mother Mary Cecilia had constantly in mind the hope to secure the approval of the Rules. That thought may have motivated her circular in which she spoke of change of superiors; at any rate, she began to invite members of the Community to make perpetual vows. This privilege was regarded as a proof of exceptional fidelity to grace and to the duties of vocation. At the profession ceremonies in August, 1865, the short formula of the vows was used for the first time, and the wording was practically the same as at present. Three were admitted to perpetual vows in 1865: Sister St. Felix Buchanan, Sister Juliana Cawley, and Sister Mary Eudoxie Marshall; and in 1867: Sister Monique Tiennoux, Sister Maria Vicaire, Sister Emmanuel Chartier, Sister Ann Joseph Aubermiller, and Sister Josephine Glutting.

NOTES — CHAPTER VI

1. Brown, *History*, I, 784.
2. Mother Mary Cecilia's Notes. A file of papers dealing with events, discovered in 1959 with other papers. Also Diary items of January 13 and 14, 1864.

3. A stone Celtic cross replaced the wooden one in 1940, the centenary year. On December 3, 1907, the remains of Mother Theodore, Sister St. Francis, and Sister Mary Joseph were exhumed and transferred to the crypt tombs in the Church of the Immaculate Conception.
4. Mother Mary Cecilia's Diary, May 4, 1864.
5. These manifold changes are detailed in a small booklet entitled, "A Century of Service of the Sisters of Providence in Vincennes, 1843-1943."
6. Brown, *History*, I, 45-46; 263-266.
7. Dupontavice à Hailändière, 26 septembre, 1854. NDUA.
8. Brown, *History*, I, 649.
9. Rev. A. Kleber, *St. Meinrad Archabbey*, pp. 140-141.
10. Book of Foundations, "St. Rose," p. 18.
11. Mother Mary Cecilia's Record of Events, 1864.
12. Book of the Foundations, "St. Rose," pp. 18-21.
13. *Sadlier's Catholic Almanac and Ordo* (New York: Sadlier, 1865), p. 156.
14. *Ibid.*, Edition 1868, p. 265.
15. Abbé Azais, *Biographical Sketch*, English translation, p. 95.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 96.
17. Later known as Sister Ann Cecilia Buell.
18. Sister Mary Joseph à Madame le Fer, March, 1863.
19. Rev. Charles Mougin à Audran, 23 mai, 1863. NDUA.
20. Diary, May 12, 1863.
21. Mother Mary Cecilia's Notes.
22. Diary, December 25, 1864. Sister Rose Ann entered the Community in 1849, and died in 1920.
23. Letter Circular, July 2, 1865.
24. Mother Mary Cecilia's Notes, November 22, 1865.
25. The statues were removed from the niches in 1897 when the building was remodeled. They were then placed in niches on the outside of St. Agatha Hall. In 1955, they were taken down, repaired, and replaced.

CHAPTER VII

The Sisters of Providence Turn to France for Advice and Renewal

The Ruillé Community Has Its First Step to Pontifical Approval

News from Ruillé brought consolation to St. Mary's. The Constitutions and Rules of the Sisters of Providence of Ruillé were definitely approved by Rome. After many delays and some misunderstandings, the Constitutions had been approved for three years by the Holy Father on August 23, 1861. At the end of the three years, the application for approval was to be made again together with evidence that the changes suggested had been made. The news had reached Ruillé by telegraph at a time when the greater number of the Sisters were gathered at the motherhouse for the annual retreat. Word was immediately sent to St. Mary-of-the-Woods together with the information that some changes had been suggested and that Ruillé would try them out.

Mother Mary Cecilia, writing to congratulate Mother Mary on the successful issue of the preliminary approval of the Constitutions, made it clear that she understood that St. Mary-of-the-Woods was not included in the Papal Brief, but she hoped to see the approval of the American Rules before her death. She asked Mother Mary to send her a copy of the revised Constitutions for study.¹ As late as 1866, however, no copies had come.

It seemed advisable that the Sisters of Providence of St. Mary-of-the-Woods should profit by the experience of the parent house, and, on learning what changes would be involved, try to make the necessary adaptations. Long correspondence would have been necessary, and not at all fully satisfactory; consequently, Mother Mary Cecilia in writing to Mother Mary again in 1865,² asked her advice about sending two Sisters to Ruillé to study the suggested changes and receive Mother Mary's counsel on the modification of the Constitutions of the American Community. Mother Mary's gracious invitation followed immediately and Sister Mary Joseph and Sister Basilide were selected to make the journey.

Two French Sisters Revisit France

It was a happy choice of emissaries. Sister Basilide in 1840, aghast at the news that the American foundation was to be a separate one, had been promised by Mother Theodore that she might return if she so desired. This promise was renewed in one of the last letters the Foundress wrote before her death.³ Now after twenty-six years of absence, Sister Basilide was happy at the thought of visiting France, but had no intention of staying there, as her roots in Indiana were deeper than she had realized. Sister Mary Joseph, intelligent and cultured, was an obvious choice. She had never been a religious of Ruillé, but as a secular had come to St. Mary-of-the-Woods in 1852 to begin her postulancy in America. She was letter perfect in the Rule, and as Mistress of Novices she taught it in theory and practice.

Plans for the trip were made and unmade with lightning rapidity since the financial problem was a serious one. When Mother Mary Cecilia learned that the French government was giving the favor of free round trip passages to France to French missionary priests and religious, the voyage became a certainty. The request for a pass for two religious was granted by the steamship company and passage was promised on a boat leaving New York in the summer of 1866. The return passage had to be secured in France, but it was certain to be granted.⁴

Arrangements had to be made for the replacement of the travelers as both held important positions. Sister Basilide, the econome, was to be replaced during her absence by Sister (afterwards Mother) Mary Ephrem, a young Sister of fine administrative ability. Sister Aloysia Foley and Sister Henrietta Mackenzie had been assisting in the novitiate, but Sister Aloysia had been ill and Mother Mary Cecilia was doubtful that the young Sister could replace the Mistress, but said that she herself "would multiply herself." Sister Mary Joseph told Mother Mary that her young assistant who was her right arm had been at the gates of death, "but she has come back to life."⁵ Sister Aloysia, by her unguided mortifications in her own home, had broken down her constitution, and her health began to decline, too late for any permanent cure. The doctor attending Sister Aloysia had a few years before assured Mother Mary Cecilia that Sister Aloysia did not have tuberculosis.⁶ It may have been that this was true at that time, but in 1866 all the evidence indicated tuberculosis in an advanced state. Worried about Sister Aloysia's frailty, Sister Mary Joseph said to her playfully,

"Dear Sister, you must not die while I am gone."⁷ Sister Aloysia smiled.

The Community was informed of the itinerary planned. The travelers were to leave St. Mary-of-the-Woods on July 9, 1866, for New York where they would embark later in July according to the reservations made for them. They were to land at Brest and stay for a short time with the Sisters, then go on to spend two or three days at St. Servan with Mme. Le Fer, en route to Ruillé. The wonderful news made everyone happy. Sister St. Vincent said she herself could not sleep the night she heard about the journey.

At last the day came. Father Chassé intended to make the trip also, and on his advice they took a stateroom on the train, a new experience for the Sisters who had made the trip in entirely different circumstances twenty-six and fourteen years before. The railroad trip seemed long to Sister Mary Joseph. "Ah!" she said with a sigh, "to think that people travel for pleasure!" The Sisters had bought a basket of food and did not need to go to the dining car. Finding their stateroom presented difficulties. A gentleman solved their problem by showing them the number of the stateroom on their tickets, and finally just as they were settling down for the night, the conductor came through to collect tickets. The next day they discovered that the gentleman who had helped them was thought to be Bishop-elect Fitzgerald of Little Rock, Arkansas, on his way to Rome.

The railroad route was over lines controlled by the Pennsylvania Railroad. By day coach to Crestline, Ohio, was a peaceful and clean trip, but from Crestline on, through Harrisburg, Allentown, and on to New York, the engine burned coal, and the dust and cinders blown into the cars were quite unpleasant. Sister Basilide marveled at the wheat and corn fields as the train passed by, and felt she understood why those commodities were less expensive in the East. Her praise became almost lyric over the beauty of the landscape, the rise of the ridges, and the curving line of the graceful bridge over the Susquehanna. Experiencing no discomfort during the trip, she could be unstinted in her admiration. Sister Mary Joseph, a poor traveler at best, had little to say of the scenic beauty.

Financial Adventures in New York

Madame Parmentier, the constant friend of all missionaries, was not at her home in Brooklyn, but her daughter, Mrs. Adele Bayer, met the

Sisters and cared for them. The financial operations in which the Sisters engaged that morning require careful charting to understand them in this day. Sister Basilide was not sure what expenses they would have to meet, but had brought a draft from Mr. McKeen of the Terre Haute Bank to be cashed in New York. The banker on whom it was drawn would not cash it without another person going surety for the amount. Adele Bayer endorsed the draft with them, but as she, too, was unknown to Banker Number One, she had to have her signature countersigned at her own bank, which now becomes Bank Two. As this proceeding took time, Father Chassé remained with Sister Mary Joseph, while Sister Basilide and Adele Bayer went to Bank Two. Banker Two gave his own check to the Sisters on Bank One, but could not cash the check for some reason unintelligible to them, probably because he did not deal in foreign exchange.

A return trip brought them back to Bank One, where the banker insisted on giving them silver dollars only, no gold, and no Paris drafts. A second call at Bank Two was equally fruitless, as this banker, though regretting that he could not help them, gave them the name of a third bank which would give them the best exchange price on the silver.

The money was too heavy for the Sisters to carry, and a messenger boy was deputed to carry it for them. He slung the heavy canvas bag over his shoulder as, at Sister Basilide's orders, he trotted along two steps in front of them. "You may be sure," wrote Sister Basilide to Mother Mary Cecilia, "that no matter what happened on the street, I never took my eyes off that bag of money." At the third bank, they secured drafts on Paris, and some gold, but at a loss, as they got only ninety-six cents on each silver dollar. In counting the silver, Banker Number Three discovered a counterfeit half-dollar. The messenger was dispatched to Bank One to secure a good coin.

On their way to the ship, Mrs. Bayer met a gentleman whom she knew. He was quite indignant at the inconvenience to which the Sisters had been put and said that if he had known it, he would have taken them to his own bank, and gotten them drafts on Paris and enough gold for their expenses without difficulty.

July 15 found them aboard the NAPOLEON III. On board, to their surprise, they learned that no charge was to be made for meals on the ship. Thus graciously did France honor her missionaries. Father Chassé had secured passage on the same boat. At the consulate they had learned that two Holy Cross Sisters, Sister St. Sebastian and Sister

Mary of the Cross, coming from New Orleans, had written for passage, but had not yet arrived to claim their tickets. Sister Mary Joseph spied a man here who was strangely familiar. He was trying to secure a passage to Europe and asked if he might have the one set aside for the Holy Cross Sisters if they did not come. Sister Mary Joseph recognized him as a salesman who had come to St. Mary's selling Irish linen and who told a long story of having to sell it to go back to Ireland within a short time. She identified him to Father Chassé. Later, the man appeared on board as the Holy Cross Sisters did not get there on time. He began to question Father Chassé about the delicate-looking Sister, how she stood the trip, etc. Sister Mary Joseph instructed Father Chassé to tell him, if he asked again, that the Sisters saw he must have sold all his linen and that he was not in such a hurry to get to Ireland. They had no further contact with "our merchant of linen," as Sister Mary Joseph called him.

Father Edward Sorin, to the surprise of the Sisters, was on board. He was disappointed that the Sisters of the Holy Cross did not arrive. He brought the Sisters of Providence cups of bouillon and questioned them searchingly, they thought, about St. Mary-of-the-Woods, the number of novices, the separation from Ruillé, the approval of their Rules. He left several openings for comments which the Sisters might offer about the purpose of their trip. It was evident, as Sister Mary Joseph wrote to Mother Mary Cecilia, that the reverend gentleman was trying to "pomp" [sic] them. The Sisters were noncommittal on the subject of their Rules and their intentions in visiting France. Father Sorin invited them to go to Le Mans to see Father Dujarié's tomb, and to visit Notre Dame on their return to the United States. He also gave them precious souvenirs from Jerusalem. On the Sisters' part, the conversation was somewhat reserved as there was still a chill in the air about the naming of St. Mary's Academy. This duplication has lost the serious import the early Sisters once thought it had. Who could imagine the flourishing academies, colleges, and shrines that would spring up in the United States the century following, invoking Mary under many titles and multiple repetitions!¹⁸

Captain Sauve, a passenger who had disposed of his own boat and was going home to France, was from Saint-Servan. "I know his sisters, and he recognized me by my resemblance to my mother," Sister Mary Joseph was happy to say. The Sisters took their meals at the second serving as it was quieter and there was too much style at the first

table. Passage, they found, was one thing, and room reservations another. They were assigned to a large room with several other women, but one of the occupants was a Baroness from Holland who was not satisfied with religious companions and demanded other quarters for herself and attendants. The Sisters were happily left alone in the vast room, and blessed the anger of the Baroness which had secured them privacy.

The boat was about four hundred feet long and proportionately wide. But after the freedom of their forest home, the Sisters found it confining. "I feel," wrote Sister Mary Joseph, "like that missionary who lived in a small cage."⁹ There were many French people on board, but Sister Mary Joseph felt she was forgetting her French as they spoke so rapidly that she could not follow them. She deplored, too, the noise they made. It was quite annoying and must seem foolish, she thought, to the quiet Yankees!

Inevitably some money was stolen from them, and also what was not a serious loss, but a more sentimental one: someone had taken the three rose plants they were bringing to Mother Mary from St. Mary's.

Disembarking at Brest, the travelers arrived by *diligence*, or omnibus, at Saint-Servan on July 29, 1866, where they had permission to stay with the Le Fer family. Mme. Le Fer had sustained a heart attack earlier in the year and seemed so frail that it was thought she might have only a few years to live. The time passed quickly here. Sister Basilide, charmed with the Le Fer family, grew restive, however, as the days went by. She was anxious to get to Ruillé before the retreat closed to see the Sisters before their dispersal to their posts. A letter was dispatched to Ruillé stating the probable time of their arrival. In the meantime, they paid a short visit to Msgr. de la Hailanière, then in retirement at Combourg, visited the home of Chateaubriand, and in Dinan the tomb of Du Guesclin, the great Breton patriot, noting the sculptured tomb and the light burning before it.

A Call on Bishop de la Hailanière

The visit to Bishop de la Hailanière was debated pro and con by both Sisters, but they felt that failure to call might be construed as an exhibition of feeling. In view of later happenings, perhaps it would have been just as well if they had not gone, since their visit did revive old memories in the Bishop's mind. Sister Basilide, imprudent as ever,

must have told the purpose of their trip to Ruillé, forgetting that the approval of their Rules had always been a point of contention in the old days when Bishop de la Hailanière had ruled the Vincennes diocese.

Presents began to make their appearance: a fine clock from Natalie Le Fer, sister-in-law of Sister Mary Joseph, two hundred francs from her sister Eugénie, a silk umbrella from Charles, other gifts of money; but the information that the crops had failed during the summer made soliciting alms out of the question. Although the primary purpose of the trip was not begging, nevertheless alms would have been most acceptable.

Mother Mary Welcomes Them at Rennes and Ruillé

In the meantime, word came that Mother Mary was making her retreat at Rennes and would see the Sisters there. They made the three-hour trip on August 10 and found themselves heartily welcomed by Mother Mary. Sister Basilide wrote of the meeting:

Mother Mary met us at the foot of the stairs. Oh, what a good Mother she is! She embraced us most affectionately, then taking me to one side, she said, "Oh my Basilide! I did not think I should ever see you again! But you have changed; only your voice and your eyes are left of you." It is useless to say how I cried. All the Sisters came to greet us. Sister Mary Joseph went with her sister Eugénie who had come with us from Saint-Servan. Mother Mary took me to the nice room she had reserved for us, saying, "Come to my room, my Basilide, a little while." There were a number of Sisters waiting in the anteroom to see Mother Mary, but Mother said, "Go, my dear Sisters. I have not seen this child for twenty-six years." I remained with her about an hour which did not seem longer than five minutes. Then she told us she would see us again at Ruillé, and that if we did not ask for everything we needed, she would be displeased with us.¹⁰

The travelers reached Ruillé on August 14 and were greeted again by Mother Mary who had preceded them. Sister Basilide had time to attend one exercise of the retreat and to speak with Msgr. Fillion, Bishop of Le Mans. She also had a long interview of three hours with Mother Mary and said she derived great profit from it.¹¹ The Feast of the Assumption combined religious and social festivities. After the High Mass, the senior Sisters from the Infirmary of St. Joseph came to embrace the travelers. The welcome given the two American Sisters

was so cordial that it touched their hearts. Sister Basilide found many of her old friends there, some very much incapacitated and some walking with canes. Then, as part of the welcome, Sister Clotilde, at that time eighty-three years old, presented bouquets of flowers which she had gathered in the woods. She sang several couplets in their honor and then, being erect and light of foot in spite of her years, she danced the Blessed Virgin's dance, one of the religious dances of Brittany. Sister Mary Joseph shook off her gravity and danced with her. By evening Sister Clotilde was completely exhausted and had to go to bed. Sister Mary Joseph sang for Mother Mary, something she did not do often on account of her lack of strength.

After the Sisters had visited the church and marveled at its beauty, they were again serenaded, this time by the boarders who had come to wish Mother Mary a happy feast. Presentation of bouquets followed, and happy speeches. Later a walk through the premises brought them to the little outdoor chapel of St. Anne, built in 1853 in "the little wood," and a visit to the Infirmary of St. Joseph, the pharmacy, and the cemetery. In that hallowed spot, tears of gratitude and affection filled their eyes as they visited the graves of Sister St. Charles Jolle who had died two years before, and Sister Eudoxie Morel who for thirty-two years had been Mistress of novices. They noted that during the retreat these graves were visited by many of the Sisters, and they had remarked also the noiseless movements of the four hundred and fifty Sisters engaged in the retreat exercises. Four hundred and fifty seemed a great number compared to the one hundred at St. Mary-of-the-Woods.¹²

They noted other changes: additions to the property, new buildings, the pharmacy, the pensionnat, the chaplain's residence, and all the evident signs of prosperity.

After dinner at noon, the firemen of the village came in full uniform headed by their captain and manager. The company presented arms, performed several maneuvers, and then saluted Mother Mary. A complimentary speech followed to thank Mother for the uniforms she had helped to purchase. The company numbered thirty, all from Ruillé, and made a fine bodyguard for the little community. They had a good fire pump and were well armed to fight fire in case of necessity.

The festivities closed with a visit to the Chaplain, Vespers, and a solemn procession in honor of the Blessed Virgin. Sister Basilide, after describing the events, added her usual closing: "I cried all the time!"¹³

Mother Mary lavished attentions on the visitors, supplied each of them with a new habit of beautiful French serge, outfitted their wardrobe completely, adding two pairs of woolen stockings for the winter. She was very generous with her time for consultation, giving them copies of the revised Constitutions and answering questions about those points of Rule that the French Sisters had had to change. Her counsel was very definite: work towards effecting these changes, but hold to the original Constitutions until new ones would be approved. Little discussion can be found in the letters about the proposed changes as those points were reserved for explanation on their return home. The two Sisters had many questions to ask in regard to their own Community and its government. Mother Mary, as later comments indicated, advised them prudently in a general way. They must work out their own solutions. Mother Mary advised also that the copies of the new Constitutions be retained in the hands of the Council, but that the opinion of a few senior private Sisters might be asked as to what would be advisable to adopt and what to omit. All of Mother Mary's suggestions, born of her long experience, were very valuable. The Superiors at St. Mary's would have to study the prescriptions of the Rule and see how they would apply to American life before confronting their Community with an unorganized number of changes.

Mother Mary Cecilia had told them to ask whether a requiem Mass for all the departed Sisters was offered at the close of the retreat. The answer was not given in the correspondence, but they said they had attended the funeral of a young Sister and were happy to note that the ceremonies at St. Mary-of-the-Woods were exactly the same, even to the number of candles carried, that the funeral Mass was a high Mass, the same for all.

Sister Mary Joseph made a copy of the picture of Mother Marie-Madeleine du Roscoät, the first Superior-General of Ruillé, and also a copy of a photograph of Mother Mary made under an obedience from the Bishop. Mother Mary had declared positively that she would never enter a photographer's shop, but Bishop Fillion brought a young woman with him, to make the photograph and so Mother Mary had no excuse.

At intervals letters came from St. Mary's bringing the miscellaneous small items of information so dear to travelers' hearts. Home remained unchanged, the sure haven, humble though it was. They learned that the harvest was very promising, the work was being done well in the

fields, that the little altar boy in whom Sister Mary Joseph was interested had played truant from his duties, and left Father Corbe without a server. Mother Mary Cecilia admonished him with poor results, and finally gave him an old-fashioned spanking which produced amendment.

Sister Olympiade was busy in Sister Mary Joseph's Esselian garden of flowers and medicinal herbs. The day she distilled peppermint made a great impression upon the Community, and brought comments. It seems that Sister Olympiade herself, the chapel, the community room, the refectory and halls were all redolent of peppermint, enjoyable as a faint fragrance, but overpowering in its full strength. The Community had no trouble finding where Sister Olympiade was and, unfortunately, also where she had been.

Loving messages came from those who wrote the travelers, some combining messages to save postage. In fact, Sister Mary Joseph wrote to Mother Mary Cecilia asking her please to see that sufficient postage was placed on the outgoing letters. Mother Mary had had to pay thirty-three and thirty-six cents overdue postage several times. The stamps on the letter told the story, but Mother Mary waved away any offer to reimburse her.

Purchases were to be made at Rennes — chenille for embroidery, thread, new white crosses, which the American Sisters thought too thin. Mother Mary had given them one thousand francs (two hundred dollars) in addition to their shopping money. The French Sisters exclaimed in mock horror at the purple sample the Sisters brought with them and promised to get them better velvet for Bishop de Saint-Palais' sleeves. "There is no purple like the French purple," they declared with pardonable pride. Two statues, one of the Sacred Heart: and one of the Immaculate Conception, our Lady with her arms crossed, excited their admiration and were to be bought if they could be brought in duty free. Other gifts came to them: one hundred pairs of rosary beads: a chalice; for Sister Mary Joseph herself, a watch which had been used by Mother St. Charles and which Mother Mary forbade her to give away. They had hoped to receive an alms from Empress Eugénie, but the Empress was spending the summer in the Pyrenees and could not be reached. They bought a few books, among them, the *Life of Madame Marie de l'Incarnation* (Madame Acarie), and the *Life and Works of Marie Lataste*, both of course in French. They looked at

Charlevoix: *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, but decided to postpone the purchase as it was too bulky to take with them.

During their stay in Rennes, they called upon Msgr. Godfrey Brossays de Saint-Marc, the Archbishop, accompanied by Eugénie Le Fer who was escorting them about the city. Msgr. Brossays de Saint-Marc received them most graciously and accepted their congratulations upon the erection of the diocese into an archdiocese, although some years had passed since the elevation had taken place (1859). Appointed to the diocese in 1841, and succeeding Bishop de Lesquen, Mother Theodore's good friend, the Most Reverend Archbishop was familiar with the progress of the Indiana mission and its clergy. He sent his thanks to Father Corbe for the gypsum from Logansport, but said that Bishop Martin had given him some which melted away. He seemed to think Father Corbe's gift would fare the same, although Sister Mary Joseph assured him of its solidity. Monseigneur and Canon Lottin were both interested in the cubes of maple sugar which the Sisters had brought from their forest. "Give me a little piece," asked Canon Lottin, "I wish to taste it." They left him a small loaf of the sugar. Maple sugar it was, of course, but he had to agree that the French product did not have the Indiana sweetness! Sadly the Sisters saw the advance of years on their good friend, the Canon. His tremor was very perceptible, and his swollen legs made walking difficult. Fortunately, the stroke he had sustained did not affect the face and head, and he conversed quite easily with the Sisters.

The day of parting came. Sister Basilide's old friends embraced her warmly, regretting to see her go. She, too, found her French heart melting a great deal, but still America had a fascination of its own. "We shall arrive home intact," she wrote, "but we have been much pulled about and embraced." Although many of the French Sisters were interested in Indiana and asked innumerable questions about everything, the subject of volunteers for America was never mentioned, out of deference for Mother Mary. The Sisters from St. Mary-of-the-Woods were careful to show that their trip had only two purposes: to discuss the Rule with Mother Mary, and to bring back pleasant recollections and purchases for Indiana. Every place they went, relatives of the Indiana Sisters called upon them: Sister Mary Xavier's brother, and Sister Therese's and Jean Delahaye's parents came to assure themselves that all was well. Countless friends of Sister

Basilide, who had a genius for making and holding friends, called to see her.

With Mother Mary's affectionate farewell, they left Ruillé on September 29 to visit Bishop Fillion for a few days at Le Mans. While in Le Mans they wished to pray at Father Dujarié's grave in the Holy Cross cemetery. Father Moreau was not in at the time they called and no one would take the responsibility of unlocking the cemetery gate. The Sisters turned their steps to the Carmelite Convent and asked for the Prioress, Mother Mary Gonzague, a former friend of Sister Mary Joseph. The Sisters had forgotten to secure the necessary permission from the Bishop to see the Sisters face to face, but Sister Mary Joseph's pleading was so eloquent, citing what she thought St. Teresa would do to cheer two French Sisters going into a foreign land, that the Prioress consented to visiting with them unveiled on condition that Sister Mary Joseph would inform Bishop Fillion or the Vicar General. Both Carmelites and Sisters of Providence knew that he would ratify the interpreted permission.

They Visit Father Dujarié's Grave

After a happy interlude of exchanging requests for prayers and willing promises, the Sisters left. In passing by Father Moreau's house on their return, they saw him at the door and took advantage of the occasion to put their petition again. Father Moreau sent the gardener for the key and the travelers prayed at the grave of their reverend Founder.¹⁴ The Sisters were unaware of the crosses and anxieties that filled the life of Father Moreau with sorrow. Not until they were aboard the paque-boat *St. Laurent* on October 13 did they learn from Father Chassé that Father Sorin, contrary to his expectations, was detained in Rome. They were also surprised to learn that Father Moreau had been superseded at the election held by the General Chapter in Rome and that the new incumbent, Bishop Pierre Dufal, had been a Holy Cross missionary in Hindustan.¹⁵

After leaving Le Mans, Sister Mary Joseph paid a short farewell visit to her home at Saint-Servan and Sister Basilide went to her beloved old mission at Argentré. She was happy to learn here that twelve of her former pupils had entered Ruillé and were now well-established religious.

Every day word came to them of so many added gifts that they began

to worry about customs duty. They embarked at Brest on October 13 and while the baggage was being loaded, they saw several enormous coffin-like crates listed in their names. The contents, well packed, were young fruit trees that a nurseryman had sent them. Sister Basilide wrote immediately to Mother Mary Cecilia asking her to have Mr. Martin prepare the ground so that the tree could be planted as soon as they reached St. Mary's. She asked further that Mother Mary Cecilia arrange with Mrs. Parmentier for payment of customs, if any, and charges for freight on their baggage. She never again wanted to have another experience with New York financial operations. She need not have worried about the customs duty as the foreign missionaries were allowed to bring in everything without any charge.

Laden with Gifts They Turned Homeward

Earlier in the year, Mr. Firmin Nippert, a Terre Haute merchant, had asked Sister Basilide to write letters of introduction for him as he was going abroad that summer with his son. Sister very obligingly did this and before they left Brest, she had a letter from Mr. Nippert saying he was sorry he could not meet them in France. He was pleased with his trip and for the benefit of his little son, he was extending his stay to visit England, Ireland, and Scotland. His boy was very enthusiastic about Europe and made his father promise to bring him back in two more years.

The return trip was uneventful and the Sisters, with only one thought in mind — to get home as soon as possible — arrived in New York on October 23, and on Monday, October 29, they reached St. Mary's after an absence of fifteen weeks. Some time was spent in exchanging greetings and welcomes, and telling the events of the trip. Then both Sisters resumed their former duties.

Sister Aloysia Foley, whom Sister Mary Joseph had depended on for help in the novitiate, came in to see Sister a few days after the return. Sister Aloysia, from her little notebook in which she had noted all the events of the past four months, gave her account of her novitiate management. Then when she had finished, she said, "Ma Soeur, I feel that I am finished. May I go to bed?" She went to bed, was anointed that night, and died Saturday, November 4, at six o'clock in the evening while the Rosary was being recited.¹⁶ This favored young Sister had entered the Community in 1860. She was the oldest daughter

of a very devout Catholic family. Early inclined to piety, she read the lives of mystics and contemplatives and tried to imitate their austerities. When she entered the Sisters of Providence, all these austerities were curtailed but the damage was already done, and her health was seriously impaired. She was conspicuous for her faithful observance of the Rule and everyone felt that her name Aloysia was particularly suited to her. As years went by, she was often spoken of as the saint of the Community.¹⁷ Her sister Margaret, who entered the Community two years later, had also seriously impaired her health by misguided austerities, but the curtailment of these excesses saved her constitution from ruin and, as Mother Mary Cleophas, she lived to be a great power in the future formation of the Community.

Very soon the travelers settled into their former routine of duties, but the memory of the trip to France was to remain with them for years. Sister Basilide no longer felt the homesickness that had troubled her in the past, and she felt that Mother Theodore, through her successor, had redeemed the promise that Sister Basilide might return to France. Both Sisters had gained spiritually by their contact with Ruillé, and Mother Mary's advice guided them for the future.

As administrators and Council members they had feared that Mother Mary Cecilia's administration might be prolonged beyond its canonical limit and make future adjustments difficult, and yet it was a subject not for discussion but for prayer. While no procedure had been indicated by Mother Mary beyond confidence in God and patience, the Sisters were strengthened and helped by the union of prayer.

NOTES — CHAPTER VII

1. A Mère Marie, 16 mars, 1862.
2. A Mère Marie, 1 février, 1865.
3. Mother Theodore to Sister Basilide, October 17, 1855.
4. Sister Mary Joseph à Mère Marie, 7 décembre, 1865.
5. Sister Mary Joseph à Mère Marie, 24 avril, 1866.
6. Mother Mary Cecilia to Sister Irenée Beach, February 4, 1862.
7. Mother Mary Cleophas, *A Memoir of Sister Aloysia*. Typescript. S.M.W.A.
8. Brown, *History*, I, 754-755.
9. Theophane Venard.
10. Sister Basilide to Sister Anastasie, August 16, 1866.
11. *Ibid.*
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*

14. Father Dujarié's remains were removed from the Le Mans cemetery by the Sisters of Providence, to the crypt of the chapel of St. Michael at Ruillé, on September 2, 1873. In September, 1977, a second translation will occur when the venerable remains will be interred in the crypt of the conventual church of the Motherhouse at Ruillé-sur-Loir.
15. Catta-Heston, *Basil Anthony Mary Moreau*, (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1955), II, 718.
16. Mother Mary Cleophas Foley, A Memoir . . . Typescript. S.M.W.A.
17. Her remains were removed March 17, 1911, from the convent cemetery and now rest in the crypt tomb near those of Mother Theodore, Sisters St. Francis Xavier and Mary Joseph, and Mother Mary Cleophas, her sister.

CHAPTER VIII

Events of Mother Mary Cecilia's Administration

Land Purchases. Aurora, Indiana, Opened. Ferdinand Closed.

The growth of population in the nearby St. Mary's Village made Mother Mary Cecilia realize that she must purchase property adjoining the Community holdings, needed as much for agricultural expansion as for protection against undesirable neighbors. An opportunity arose when Bishop de Saint-Palais authorized the transfer of the village church, now old and dilapidated, from the area west of the new Institute (about the present site of the Conservatory of Music) to a location in the village. Mother Mary Cecilia began negotiating with the Bishop for the property and towards the end of the year, the transaction was completed.¹

Two shares of the Smith farm adjoining the northern boundary of the property provided land already under cultivation. According to the agreement, Mr. Alex Smith might occupy the farmhouse for one year, paying three dollars a month rental. He was entitled to the "down apples," or those that fell from the trees during 1867. The Sisters were entitled to one-third of the wheat crop already planted. Alex Smith's lease would expire in the fall of 1867, and he promised to use his influence to get his brothers to sell the remaining three shares.²

A Tribute and a Prophecy

At the Commencement Exercises of June 27, 1866, the Honorable Bayless Hanna, of Terre Haute, United States Senator from Indiana, concluded his address in a striking manner by saying:

The unostentatious tomb of Mother Theodore yonder in the little village of the dead is unembellished with monumental significance, but the narrow path that winds there will every year become furrowed deeper and deeper by the footprints of the grateful pilgrims who will go there to do homage to the memory of the Foundress of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.³

To Elizabeth Moore, the graduate of the day, and the students who took part in the program, the story of the Foundation and the intrepid

Foundress was an old and loved tradition. Their visits to her grave had already become a regular pattern in their campus life, and succeeding years would intensify their love and veneration for Mother Theodore.

August, 1866, marked the opening of the house at Aurora, Dearborn County, Indiana, about twenty-four miles west of Cincinnati. The church and school were very well built. It was the intention of the pastor, Reverend F. J. Klein, to turn the rectory over to the Sisters as their convent, but he could find no lodging for himself in the town. He hastily fitted up two rooms for the Sisters and made them as comfortable as possible in their limited quarters in the school. Sister Mary Stanislaus Hayes was named superior, and with her were Sister Mary Borgia Larkin and Sister Barbara Ewers, a novice. The parish was made up of working people, all happy to have the Sisters and all very generous to them. The income of the school was to be taxed for two years to help pay the parish debt; "as much as you can spare," Father Klein said to the Sisters. The charge for tuition was fifty cents a month for those who could pay. There was only one music pupil, a girl who played the melodeon. A choir of young girls was trained for church services, but no charge was made for this. The pastor's request that a Sister play the organ in the church was refused by Mother Mary Cecilia, who explained that it was not our custom. The school was placed under the patronage of St. Francis Xavier.⁴

As one new post of duty was assumed, another was very reluctantly given up. For four years the Sisters of Providence had been happily established in Ferdinand, Indiana, a devout German Catholic settlement. The American character of the Sisters of Providence was very marked. Not many of its subjects were from German families, and it became impossible to supply teachers of German. The people of Ferdinand wished very much to have a foundation of German Sisters and as soon as word was received that a foundation of Benedictine Sisters was to be made at Ferdinand, the Sisters of Providence regretfully withdrew from the convent and school where they had been very happy.⁵

In August, 1868, the Sisters of Providence withdrew from the German schools at New Albany and at Lafayette,⁶ and retained only the English-speaking schools. The Lafayette school was not a separate convent. The children belonged to St. Boniface Church, and the pastor wanted teachers who were German-speaking Sisters.

September, 1866, brought to Mother Mary Cecilia the sad news of

her mother's death. Although her father was of French descent, Marie le Fèvre Bailly was called a princess of the Ottawa tribe. She had survived her husband, Joseph Bailly, for thirty-one years. Entirely devoted to the spiritual welfare of the Indians of her tribe, Madame Bailly never learned French or English, but spoke Ottawa only. So greatly loved was she by the Ottawas that at the time of the treaty between the U.S. Government and the Potawatomi Indians, one provision of the treaty awarded a section of land in the present Will County, Illinois, to Marie Bailly, a relative of the great Shabbona, "the friend of the white man."⁷

The Indians named the reservation for her, but as they could not pronounce her name, "Marie" was softened off into "Monee," the name the region now bears. In 1859 the name of the adjoining town, Carey, was changed to Monee. Madame Bailly never used the reservation for herself, but lived in the Bailly Homestead near Chesterton, Indiana. In 1853 she sold the reservation to William B. Ogden, the first mayor of Chicago, for \$5 an acre.⁸ Francis Howe, who had married Rose Bailly, had been employed in his early years as chief clerk in Mr. Ogden's office.⁹

At one time the daughters of the Bailly family had been approached with the request that they cede their portion of the estate to the husbands or brothers-in-law in return for the promise to care for Madame Bailly.¹⁰ This was opposed by Rose Bailly Howe and Mother Mary Cecilia who refused to sign the necessary quitclaims. Many land sales had taken place and so many negotiations had been entered into that the affairs of the estate were very involved. The number of heirs, too, complicated the problem. It was therefore expected that several years would be necessary to finish the work of administration. It was generally known, however, that it was Madame Bailly's hope that the property would become the home of some religious order should it pass out of Bailly hands.

Mother Mary Cecilia did not give way to her natural feelings, and made no comment or record of her mother's death.

On October 29, 1866, Sister Mary Joseph and Sister Basilide returned from their trip to France. The purchases and presents they brought were much admired; the books were encased in calico covers to protect them from fingermarks; the new statues set in place; the seeds and young trees were set out hopefully, and the new embroidery materials admired. The beautiful French purple material for Bishop de

Saint-Palais' new soutane was duly admired, and Sister Mary Xavier's fingers were restless to begin to make it up. The Bishop's first sight of it was on a visit to St. Mary's on December 21, 1866, after the return of the travelers. On this day also the Bishop signed the deed for the old village church property for which the Community paid six hundred dollars.

Coal Discovered on our Property

The post-war lull had set in, and one of its manifestations was the curtailing of any special celebration for St. Cecilia's day. The Sisters enjoyed the day by themselves, but no firing of cannon and no demonstration took place. From time to time appear records of money borrowed and money repaid. The outstanding debts did not seem to decrease, but as old debts were paid off, new creditors came into the picture. Incidental business affairs were mentioned: the leasing of a strip of land to Joseph Broadhurst for a coal pit;¹¹ "passes" received from the railroads; a conference with Martin Grace in Terre Haute about a monument to Mother Theodore in the cemetery, but nothing definite decided;¹² a covered connection planned between Providence and the Institute;¹³ the presentation by Bishop de Saint-Palais of the deed to a lot adjoining Community property in Madison. Encouraging, too, was the news that coal had been discovered on Community property at 110 feet underground, and that three men joined with Mr. Broadhurst to mine it.¹⁴

June 17 marked a pleasant visit from the Bishop who was on his way to Indianapolis to bless the cornerstone of the new St. John Church.

The year 1867 coincided with the increasing debility of Father Corbe. His health continued intermittently poor from that time on, and his duties seemed harder for him as years went by. The Forty Hours' Devotion, ordinarily held during the three days preceding Ash Wednesday, was postponed until March 1 and was combined with the triduum ordered by Pius IX preceding the opening of the Vatican Council.

The Union Express Company and the Adams Express both closed their offices in Terre Haute, and the American Express Company remained the only one available in Terre Haute.¹⁵ Mother Mary Cecilia had often found it convenient in order to save time to send money by express order or to receive it that way rather than through the bank.

Mother Mary Cecilia's diary began to show discouragement and the depression that must at times have troubled her. At Easter there was no general dinner for the Community. The Sisters from the Institute had always enjoyed these festivities, as otherwise they did not come to the motherhouse without special permission. "There is no community dinner today — this may be considered as settled — it is too much labor in the kitchen and dining room to have this dinner too often."¹⁶

By May 14, Mother Mary Cecilia had finished her visitation of the missions. "I return from my visit of the missions; the last this year, perhaps the last of my life."

The death of Sister Mary Rose O'Donaghue, one of the nurses at the Military Hospital, took place on June 22, 1868. This happy and generous Sister entered Community on August 29, 1862. In 1863 she was stationed at the Military Hospital in Indianapolis, and after the hospital was returned to the city of Indianapolis in 1865, she resumed her ordinary work of teaching at Evansville and later at St. John's school, Indianapolis. In 1867, the first symptoms of consumption showed themselves as her strength had been impaired by her labors in the hospital. One day that same year, she was viciously attacked by a large dog which the Sisters were trying to drive out of the house, and she was bitten severely several times before she was rescued. The shock and fright added to the injuries sustained completely wrecked her health. Every attempt was made to save her, but no treatment was of any avail. She died very suddenly at St. Mary-of-the-Woods infirmary on June 22, 1868.¹⁷ Her sister, Sister John Francis, who entered the Community on the same day with her, survived her by fifty-two years. One brother, Denis, a seminarian at the time of her death, was to be ordained in 1874. He served successively as Chancellor, Vicar General, and Auxiliary Bishop of Indianapolis, 1900-1910, and as Bishop of Louisville, Kentucky, from 1910-1925.¹⁸ Another brother, Timothy, became a diocesan priest, and three younger sisters entered a Benedictine Community¹⁹ in New Orleans. This additional information was supplied by a niece, Sister Rose Pauline O'Donaghue, S.P., (1908-1950).

The Commencement exercises on June 26, 1868, were as usual very successful. The program and exhibition, always greatly admired, attracted much attention. Some time later, Sister Mary Eudoxie Marshall described it to a former pupil:

You would have loved the Exhibition and not found any fault

with it because you love us, and love is blind. However, Mr. Küssner did not arrive in time to tune the pianos until the program had commenced. I am not sure but that you would have perceived the want of trueness in the tone for, by the by, it is not said that "love is deaf." . . .

The trio, "A Singing Lesson to the Daughter of the Regiment," seemed to be particularly successful. The Countess, the girl, and a Corporal were the characters in this number; an old pupil a contralto, came in time to take the corporal's part. Other numbers on the program were: a duet for two pianos by Goria; a duet for piano and seraphine: *Voeu à la Vierge*, and a quartette singing "Homage to Verdi," with a little flower girl doing her part well.²⁰

Wooden Statues Installed in Providence Park

A pretty ceremony marked July 2, 1868; the blessing and installation of the new wooden statues of Our Lady of the Woods and Saint Joseph in the little park in front of Providence. Father Chassé came from Terre Haute to assist Father Corbe in the ceremony.

The statue of the Blessed Virgin was carried in procession to the singing of the Litany of Loretto. After the placing of the statue in the niche, the choir sang "O Regina Potens," and then returned to the house singing the *Magnificat*. The statue of St. Joseph was brought in procession, and the choir sang, "Te Joseph Celebrent," and the canticle, "Rempli d'une sainte allégresse," and chorus: "Oui, les vrais enfants de Marie, Saint Joseph, sont aussi tes enfants."²¹ Then the procession returned to the chapel singing, "Bénissons à jamais." The procession, the hymns, and the shrine-like niches for the statues inspired an air of reverential awe.²²

The circular of July 2, 1868, announcing the annual retreat and the coming election was entirely different in tone from the similar announcement of 1865. The principal theme was the need of a retreat for very active persons, and the cultivation of the love of God and detachment in a religious. The coming election occupied two paragraphs including the stipulated prayers for the success of the important matter. No mention was made of any change or the advisability of changes which the circular of 1865 had stressed.

The Coming Election Excites Deep Concern

And yet the welfare of the Community was of paramount importance to the Sisters who held posts of responsibility. It was distressing to them to see intervals of time which no desirable applicants presented themselves, and infinitely more distressing to find professed Sisters leaving the Community when a word of sympathy or understanding would have saved the vocation. Sudden decisions precipitated action on the part of these Sisters, and the defection was reported to the Council as an accomplished fact in which they were powerless to help. There was little patience in Mother Mary Cecilia's temperament, and she, firm in her own vocation, could not understand any temptation to waver. Later, however, she was to admit in a letter to Bishop de Saint-Palais:

The religious discipline I enforce appears not to be with the spirit of the age. It is thought too strict, and yet I know no other. . . . I am pronounced too severe, that Sisters suffer from it, and it makes me unpopular with people in general. I learned the particulars of this from Bishop de la Hailanière. He wrote me not long after he was visited by persons from our place. He said that in reading the *Catholic Almanac*, he had often wondered why our Community did not increase as other religious institutions did; but he had heard why and told me that I am "too severe and have not the heart of a mother for the young girls who present themselves, which keeps off subjects. For this reason in the diocese of Vincennes vocations are not directed to St. Mary's."²³

Still later, she was to admit quite honestly:

My reputation of severity keeping off subjects may have a good deal of truth in it, as since I have been out of office more postulants have come than ever before.²⁴

A comment from Bishop de la Hailanière pertains to this complaint:

You tell me the election for Superior-General has named S. Anastasie. I do not know her. . . . Mother Cecilia was very capable. I regret to have been the cause of her refusal to be re-elected. I do not know how matters went at the election, but Mother Cecilia had written her intentions to me. I told her something that wounded her despite the care I had taken and thereupon she wrote that because of that she was resigning. She would have done it at the retreat if the Fathers had not prevented her. I wrote to her, but she refused to answer me.²⁵

Sister Anastasie, as First Assistant, tried to speak to Mother Mary Cecilia about the way the Sisters felt, and to transmit their feeling to her, but the ordinary rejoinder was, "Let them go to Father Corbe, and tell him." As for Sister Anastasie's influence on Mother Mary Cecilia, it was absolutely nothing. "I was like a number with a cipher put in front of it to diminish its value," she wrote to Mother Mary.²⁶ Her suggestions were swept aside and ignored, as she explained thus figuratively. Sister Anastasie herself was gentle in disposition, and no match for her harsh superior.

Requests for advice had been sent to Mother Mary through Sister Mary Joseph and Sister Basilide when they visited France. The Sisters must have presented their domestic problems and asked for guidance. With tact and prudence, Mother Mary answered in general terms, but could not recommend a specific line of conduct since she could not hear both sides of the question.

Father Corbe, besieged upon all sides, urged Mother Mary Cecilia to ask Bishop de Saint-Palais for a prorogation of the elections for a year or so until she could finish her building program, but she refused to do this since she had already announced the elections.

Oddities had shown themselves in Mother Mary Cecilia's way of action. She had substituted a profound bow in place of the genuflection in the church, saying that that was the way it was done in Ruillé. The travelers from France brought no such news of this innovation, but Mother Mary Cecilia, in re-reading an old letter of Mother Mary's, came to this conclusion. The letter, describing the new observances of the Office, remarked on the beautiful effect of the inclinations made during it: the slight inclination at the Holy Name, the medium inclination at other passages, and the profound bow at the *Gloria Patri*, and also on entering and leaving the chapel,²⁷ omitting to state that the profound inclination was accompanied by the genuflection. Many protests came from the pastors of the schools, and Bishop Luers ordered Mother Mary Cecilia to return to the practice of the genuflection under penalty of being reported to Rome.²⁸

The greatest danger that threatened was that Mother Mary Cecilia, through seeming necessity, might become irremovable, so to speak, in office if some change were not made at the proper time under Church law. Some adherents had spread a rumor that Mother Theodore had selected her as successor, but Sister Mary Joseph, who had been with Mother Theodore at the time of her death, and for some months

preceding, denied this. Letters to Mother Mary at this time reveal the anxieties with which the Superiors were careful not to burden the Sisters. Mother Anastasie explained that she had told the Council members that she did not wish to serve as a Council member under Mother Mary Cecilia again, but she evidently did not expect the mantle to descend upon her. Sister Basilide, on the contrary, wondered that Mother Anastasie was surprised, since it was almost inevitable that a Council member should be chosen to succeed Mother Mary Cecilia, and Mother Anastasie fulfilled the canonical requirements of age.

Sister Basilide, in a previous letter to Mother Mary, outlined some of the difficulties.

We are worried about our debts which seem to be increasing. They are necessitated, we are told, by the building which is characterized by too much splendor. I can't see how it is simply for the glory of God and the welfare of souls. Maybe I am mistaken . . . I have said nothing to *notre Mère*; that would cause her pain and change nothing, but I am making it known to you, my dear Mother, in order to relieve and calm myself; things will continue thus for some time; all that I ask is that God will give me patience to profit by what causes me so much pain, and not permit that our dear Community suffer in its spirit nor in its existence.

. . . We pray for more postulants, and for a good spirit in those who replace those who are gone.²⁹

Sister Basilide, hasty by nature and not given to reflection, did not give Mother Mary Cecilia full credit for her excellent management. In the financial statement which Mother presented to the Bishop in 1867, she showed her indebtedness to be \$19,000, and cash on hand \$10,000 and possible assets of \$9,000, which she expected to receive from the missions.³⁰ This financial statement should have caused no alarm, for Mother Mary Cecilia was successful in financial matters.

No Dispensation Asked for Extension of Term

The day before the elections was devoted by the Bishop and the Council to forming the Chapter. The next day, August 7, at the first assembly of the completed Chapter, Mother Mary Cecilia made the customary deposition of keys and Rule Book, the symbols of her office, and withdrew from the room. Bishop de Saint-Palais then remarked that the fourth triennial of Mother Mary Cecilia's years in

office had expired, and that he had received no request for a dispensation for her continuance. He looked at the Council members as if to ask if such a request were forthcoming. No request was made, and the Bishop said that since no request had been made, he would not give a dispensation, and the Chapter should proceed to elect a new superior general to succeed Mother Mary Cecilia, and that, without a dispensation, Mother could not succeed herself. The announcement was a surprise and a shock to some of the Chapter members who seemed not to be expecting a change. A murmur of protests arose, but nothing definite was presented. At any rate, the Bishop's pronouncement was clear, and with tears, some of pity and some of indignation, the Chapter voted.³¹ It was not until the second ballot that Mother Anastasie was elected Superior-General, and then only by the one more than one-half. Mother Mary Cecilia was recalled, and received the result of the election with her usual composure. The other elections followed in due course, resulting in the following members of the Council: Sister Mary Joseph, first assistant; Sister Mary Ambrose, second assistant, Sister Mary Cleophas, Mistress of Novices; Sister Basilide, econome; and Sister Mary Basile O'Donnell, secretary.³²

Painful Adjustments Follow Slowly

The emotional sympathy of the Sisters who were devoted to Mother Mary Cecilia was expressed in no uncertain terms all through the following days, and even while the retreat was in progress. The new Superiors were in anything but an enviable position. The proclamation of the election had not yet been made, and when the Community assembled in silence for dinner, Mother Anastasie delayed in order to speak to the Bishop. Mother Mary Cecilia took her place among the senior Sisters (a practical announcement of the results of the election), and ate her dinner there. After the ceremony of the Proclamation when the Community again assembled for supper, Mother Anastasie thought that Mother Mary Cecilia would take the place she had chosen at noon. Her failure to provide a place was interpreted by Mother Mary Cecilia and her sympathizers as a slight. The confusion was understandable as the Community had never before had a retiring Mother General, and since the outcome of the elections was unpredictable, no arrangements had been made for proper seating. For twelve years, Mother Mary Cecilia had occupied the first place in the dining room, and as assistant

she had presided in Mother Theodore's absence or illness; consequently, she seemed to expect to resume a seat at Mother's table. Mother Anastasie, always in awe of Mother Mary Cecilia, could not quickly shake off this feeling and assume the proper air of thoughtful condescension which might have saved the day. When Mother Mary Cecilia asked where she was to sit, and no one ventured to tell her to occupy a less important place, she left the dining room, and went immediately to her bedroom. Her meals from that time on were brought to her, and so constant were the callers coming to express their sympathy, and in many cases, indignation, that the Community was very unlike the calm, disciplined group it had previously been. Sister Mary Ambrose resigned her office the day of the elections, and by the next morning, Mother Anastasie, worn out by hostility and the insinuation that she had gained her office unjustly, begged the Bishop to relieve her of her charge and to appoint another Sister in her place. The Bishop took a firm stand, ordered Mother Anastasie to remain in office and carry out her duties.

Perhaps the greatest proof that there was no self-seeking in the matter was shown by the lack of any organized plan to meet the changes. Then, too, trouble might not have developed had there not been a strong faction in the Community commiserating with the deposed Mother, and not allowing her the time for prayer and resignation which she so greatly needed.

According to Rule, she was permitted to choose her place of residence. She chose Lafayette, provided that one of her strongest supporters, Sister Eugenia Gorman, remain there as superior. Everything she asked for was given her. Mother Anastasie asked her to continue the translation of the Rule from French to English to show her that she had not withdrawn her confidence. Mother Mary Cecilia accepted this charge, but refused to change her hurt manner. She asked to go to Terre Haute and remain at St. Joseph's until the Lafayette Sisters called for her there. The new superiors tried everything in their power, but they were not successful in mollifying her.

Bishop de Saint-Palais was exasperated when he heard of the episode in the dining room as the sympathizers were not slow in relating it; and when he saw the rebellious reaction of some of the Sisters, he cancelled the second Benediction after Vespers which he had ordinarily given, and imposed silence on the Community during meals on Assumption Day. The poor Sisters, punished for the slight

shown Mother Mary Cecilia, ate in silence on the beloved feastday of the year. Once that terrible day was over, hope was entertained that brighter days were to come.

How pleasant it would be if we could say in the language of the old fairy tales that after Mother Mary Cecilia's departure, she was happy and the whole Community lived happily ever after. But such was not to be the case for some years. Perhaps some might wish that this painful episode in the Community history be passed over, but because so many misconceptions have been current among the Sisters, it seems better to sum up as briefly as possible the occurrences of the next few years.

Mother Mary Cecilia taught a few classes at St. Ignatius Academy, Lafayette, and worked at the translation and adaptation of the Rules as Mother Anastasie had requested. She practically ruled the house even though she should have returned to status as a subject. She wrote to those Sisters whom she felt to be in sympathy with her, seeking human consolation for her injured spirit. Sister Eugenia Gorman, the superior in Lafayette, as we noted, was a strong partisan of Mother Mary Cecilia's cause, and went so far as to write to the various local superiors as soon as Mother Anastasie began her round of visitation to ask them to show their indignation to Mother Anastasie and to refuse her the customs of welcome and deference. She also wrote, "This plot was hatched on board the *Napoleon III.*"³³ Mother Anastasie wrote both to Mother Mary Cecilia and to Sister Eugenia stating that she had positive proof that such accusations had been made, and appealing to Mother Mary Cecilia to help Sister Eugenia see her duty in the matter. Mother Mary Cecilia professed herself as entirely out of sympathy with any such accusation and said she would use her influence to change Sister Eugenia's mind. At the same time, there was no decrease in the number of sympathetic letters Mother Mary Cecilia received nor in her steady replies to them. She also advised Mother Anastasie not to use harsh measures with Sister Eugenia as she would be driven into a position where evil consequences might arise.

Mother Anastasie's letter to Sister Eugenia is pathetic in its expression:

Being considered a usurper, I cannot announce my coming short sojourn at Lafayette with the slightest degree of pleasure; on the contrary, it is only in obedience to Father Bishop and Father Corbe that I consent to go where my heart would suffer such a cross. . . . My heart weeps bitterly contrasting my thoughts of

today with those of years ago when we conversed together in this same room. I love you as I then did. I pray for you more than ever.³⁴

Later in the year 1868-69, occurred some very unfortunate events. The Bailly estate was not settled, and Mrs. Rose Bailly Howe, wishing to take her two daughters, Rose and Frankie, abroad for several years, offered the Bailly Homestead to the Sisters of Providence to be used as a convent or school, with, or course, Mother Mary Cecilia in charge. Mother Mary Cecilia wrote to Bishop de Saint-Palais, telling him of her sister's offer and asking him to notify Mother Anastasie if he approved.

Just before the retreat of 1869, Mother Mary Cecilia wrote to Mother Anastasie saying that she was going to Fort Wayne for a few days, and was presuming permission to do so. She said that Sister Mary Ambrose, who was superior there, having been appointed to that position after her resignation from the Council, would copy some of the Community writings which Mother Mary Cecilia was completing. She added also that she hoped Mother Anastasie would send the same number of Sisters to Lafayette who were there the preceding year. The surprise note follows: "I have written to Father Bishop to lay a matter before him."³⁵

From Fort Wayne she wrote again to Mother Anastasie explaining the matter, for fear that her letter might not have reached the Bishop, and said that she herself was returning to Lafayette.

Mrs. Howe spoke to the Lafayette Sisters about converting the Bailly Homestead into a convent and school. All the Sisters want to go with me. I discouraged them. . . . Mrs. Howe will dispose otherwise of the household property if the offer is not accepted. The names I suggest are Sister Eugenia Gorman, Sister Mary Angèle O'Donald, and also Sister Charlotte Joyce. I have no observation to make about Sister Rose Haag as she will go where I go.³⁶ The Sisters at Baillytown will be Sisters of Providence attached in religious submission to their Motherhouse at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. . . .

It may embarrass your mission list to let Sister Eugenia come, as it will be more difficult to replace her, and for that reason I would myself refuse her, but only for the fact that it is only too true that she has injured herself with the Superiors. Knowing her disposition now better than ever, I feel confident that whatever

friendliness and confidence your charity might bestow on her, she will not feel easy and happy. The chance to maintain her which I think is your charitable wish, is to let her come with me. . . .

I saw Bishop Luers in Fort Wayne. He said Mrs. Howe had written him of her intention and asked his approval; he said he had assured her of it, giving his consent, and saying other things showing his pleasure. . . .³⁷

Mother Mary Cecilia's letter to Bishop de Saint-Palais had stated the offer, and while Mother Mary Cecilia was marshalling arguments in favor of acceptance, she wrote three letters in one week to Mother Anastasie, saying the Bishop had accepted. Before Mother Anastasie received the letter quoted above, she had, on the Bishop's recommendations, put the mission of Calumet on the Obedience List of 1869 and named Sister Eugenia Gorman, Sister Rose Haag, Sister Olympiade Boyer (who had been strong in defense of Mother Mary Cecilia since the past election), and Sister Athanasius Fogarty. Mother Mary Cecilia received her list brought by the Sisters returning to Lafayette. Her indignation was very great, although she expressed herself politely to Mother Anastasie:

Sister Olympiade and Sister Athanasius would be totally unsuited. I must have with me Sisters who will bear the privation. Sister Olympiade is too old, and to take her away from Mother Theodore's grave would be to take the heart out of her body. As for Sister Athanasius, there would be no field there for her special services. I keep Sister Charlotte with me until I hear from you.³⁸

Mother Mary Cecilia wrote to Bishop de Saint-Palais on the same date, and to the same effect. His Lordship sent the letter to Mother Anastasie with a footnote saying that unless he was mistaken, the nomination of Sister Olympiade was considered as an offense by Mother Mary Cecilia.³⁹

The Council Refuses Mrs. Howe's Deed

It seems that Mrs. Howe had been fully informed about plans to open a high school at the Bailly Homestead, and she was greatly disappointed that this was not prepared for at once. She gave a deed for the Homestead to Mother Mary Cecilia, but had it made out to Eleanor Bailly instead of to the Sisters of Providence. Mother Mary Cecilia sent

the deed to Father Corbe who obligingly agreed to accept it, but the Council would not do so. On the whole, the Council was unwilling to accept any deed, even for a three years' trial, but finally agreed to make a trial at the Homestead without a deed. There were several reasons for the refusal; one, and the lesser one, that the deed had a clause in it reading thus: "No compensation in case of failure will be asked for [by the Community] for any improvement."⁴⁰ This clause indicated that building was expected there and Mother Anastasie was unwilling to commit herself. The second and graver reason was an indication that Mother Mary Cecilia, in her present frame of mind, might actually separate herself and her little group from the Sisters of Providence and form an independent foundation. As we shall see, this was not an imaginary difficulty. The presence of the name "Eleanor Baily" on the deed, "or any Sister of Providence whom Mother Mary Cecilia would name;" a clause suggested by Mother Mary Cecilia, if once accepted by the Sisters of Providence, would open the way to litigation should the break come to pass.

The arguments that Mother Mary Cecilia adduced for opening the boarding school sounded plausible did not Mother Anastasie call to mind the objections formerly raised when Father Sorin opened an academy under the Sisters of the Holy Cross.⁴¹ "The Homestead is located in a secluded spot, always good for boarding schools. It is not too far from Chicago, the terminus of the Union Pacific Railroad, which connects with California; and Michigan City is only thirteen miles away."⁴² It would be necessary to manage a farm; a cow, a wagon, and a team of horses must be bought. May she use the last of her inheritance in fixing up the Homestead and making it habitable as a convent? The amount is less than five hundred dollars and all of it will be needed. Then followed a list of needs: "furniture — two or three iron bedsteads from Lafayette (they have more than they need), and the bed I always use; two wood stoves from Lafayette, also some old vestments, altar linens, a crucifix, textbooks. Mrs. Howe is leaving her library, but more books needed."⁴³

Sister Mary Joseph answered these letters suggesting that they withdraw from Calumet since the personnel was not satisfactory, and explaining that it was not possible to send the other Sisters she asked for.

Mother Mary Cecilia with her keen judgment had no doubt whatever

who was the chief opponent in the matter, and addressed her letter to Mother Anastasie in care of Sister Mary Joseph:

Your letter of the 20th is just received. Your explanation is not satisfactory, and I resign — withdraw — what I requested. But the engagement with Baillytown is too far gone to back out. Therefore, I have informed Father Bishop and Father Corbe, that we three Sisters will endeavor to suffice; at least, by securing that place for the Community. We can make a trial for one year; if at the end of the year we see that there is no use to persist in trying to form an establishment there, we can give it up. On the contrary, if there is a fair prospect of a creditable mission, you might be able to give a Sister or Sisters qualified for the establishment. I feel there is no obligation to ask a second permission as the appointment was given, by accepting the establishment and reading out our names on the list of obediences. Availing myself of this, I will go at least to learn if the prospect held out can ever be realized.⁴⁴ To Bishop de Saint-Palais, Mother Mary Cecilia wrote:

Today I answer Mother Anastasie that since she cannot give me the two Sisters who are willing to come, whom I consider so well suited, I do not accept the two she substitutes. I tell her again not to send them, that if she does, I will send them back. Sister Mary Joseph may push her authority so far as to send them anyhow; but if she does, I will do what I say; and if any excitement is created by that it will be their fault and not mine. I have up to this period humiliated myself to them in all things, and I have suffered everything in silence, but on this occasion it is not in my power, or rather, circumstances do not permit me to humiliate myself and accept all.

It may be that they are short of subjects and cannot very well spare these two Sisters that I named, but why don't they explain a little and show some consideration? But no, it is all authority!

Sister Charlotte stopped here of herself, saying she would write and wait for the answer, so she would not be obliged to come from Fort Wayne if they consented to let her come with me. When the refusal came, she declared she would come, and insisted that I would let her come. I am obliged to make her submit and go to Fort Wayne, but she says that she will come from Fort Wayne to Calumet anyhow. It will depend upon me to make that Sister resigned, to make her submit and do her

employment faithfully. There are other Sisters in the same dispositions, and Mother Anastasie with her Council better have a little more management and not drive the Sisters to extremity. I will go to Baillytown only with Sister Eugenia and Sister Rose; if Sister Eugenia and myself can make out to keep the school at Calumet, we will do it; or, at least, I will come and find a home and die in my father's house. My heart is grieved to the utmost degree.⁴⁵

The situation in the new location was bleaker than Mother Mary Cecilia had expected. The Sisters undertook to teach in the town of Calumet, later called Chesterton, in what was evidently a district school. There was no accommodation for them at the school and the trip had to be made in the wagon over the three miles of road. Miss Katherine McKone joined the group as a lay teacher; Mary Simms, a young girl from Lafayette, gifted in music as well as able to conduct a classroom, came with her parents' permission, to offer her services. She later joined the Community at St. Mary-of-the-Woods⁴⁶ as Sister Francis Clare, and spent many successful years as a music teacher.

Early in December, 1869, Mother Anastasie sent Sister Mary Angèle O'Donald to help out. Mother Mary Cecilia had arranged to rent a house near the school, at one hundred dollars a year, which the two Sisters occupied during the week, spending Friday evening to Sunday morning at the Bailly Homestead. Sister Rose remained with Mother Mary Cecilia during the week, but the whole group went to Sunday Mass at Chesterton unless they were fortunate enough to have a visiting priest. Later on, Mother Mary Cecilia asked for Sister Mary Celestia, a music teacher. The classes were not large, and Sister Mary Celestia agreed to come although she was somewhat advanced in years. She remained some months teaching a class of ten music pupils. The income was a great help to the house.

Mother Anastasie did all in her power to conciliate Mother Mary Cecilia but she was not successful. Very often her well-meant efforts roused stiffly phrased, if not angry retorts.

An invitation to come home is not needed by me. I can come any time I ask permission, and I will occupy the room you will have the kindness to prepare for me. . . . I am not suffering from any false reports.⁴⁷

Mother Anastasie granted all the requests and permissions asked for by Mother Mary Cecilia. She sent her the bell from St. Mary's Institute

as she felt the convent would need one. The bell was not removed from the Homestead when Mother Mary Cecilia left it, but was finally purchased by the Sisters of Providence in April, 1956, and brought to the museum at St. Mary-of-the-Woods.

Mother Mary Cecilia wrote again later that she had gone to Fort Wayne without taking a Sister with her, that she had let Sister Mary Angèle go to Lafayette to have a tooth fixed, and that Sister Mary Angèle, wishing to visit her mother in Peru, was taken there by Mrs. Howe who "happened to pass by."

Judging from the few letters to private Sisters which are extant, Mother Mary Cecilia must have been a prolific writer. The tone of the letters is warmly affectionate, rather a contrast to the plain-spoken letters of her terms of administration. She refers frequently to "my state of humiliation," and "being in exile," forgetting that she herself had urged the foundation at the Bailly Homestead. Perhaps like Caesar she preferred to be first in Iberia, rather than second in Rome. An excerpt from one of the letters will show some of the qualities above mentioned, and justify the anxiety of Mother Anastasie as to Mother Mary Cecilia's possible action:

Your letter of November 29th was received in due time. I thought that Sister St. John would also write, and expecting a letter from her has made me wait all this time to write again. . . . I hope, dear Sisters, I still have a place in your affection and kind remembrance, and although the adorable Will of God has cut off the relation of spiritual Mother and daughter which existed for so many years between us, yet we need not renounce the affection of divine charity which bound us in the love of God. I feel convinced that you still retain the same for me, and on my part, I shall carry to the grave all the affection I have for my Sisters. In all my letters to you, I have spoken most freely; you (both of you), are among the very few Sisters to whom I open my heart and confide my sufferings, my thoughts and my remarks. I mention it to say this, that you, of course, understand what I communicated is of the *strictest* confidence, and that you are never to tell anyone what I said. I repeat this precaution to put you on your guard, lest otherwise you might inadvertently tell something of what I have written to you. I trust you have followed my recommendation to burn my letters, and that all those I have written are thus destroyed, and will do the same to those I will write hereafter. Last

year I warned you against Sister St. Bernard as one who did not feel as you did, and to whom it would be dangerous to make any remarks. I am happy to inform you that it was a mistake to think that of her. . . . She has explained away all those reasons to my satisfaction. I did not reproach her nor did I say anything to draw her to me, but suspecting that I had thought her gained [to Mother A's views], she wrote to undeceive me. You need not mistrust her any more, and when you see her, you can speak freely if you wish. . . .

One of you will write to me to acknowledge this letter, even if you have been forbidden (which I hardly think) to write to me; write a line or two anyhow simply to say that my letter has been received. . . .

The confidence and affection I get from the Sisters [in Lafayette] in my adversity is certainly a supernatural feeling, for it is given me in my state of humiliation, and it seems to increase rather than to diminish. . . .

We are now five Sisters, and all Mother Theodore's Sisters. We speak of the old times, but it is only with a sigh that we can do it.⁴⁸

Mother Mary Cecilia speaks of her own poor health, and the increasing disabilities of old age — she was then fifty-six, an age which in 1870 was considered advanced.

To Mother Anastasie, she wrote later:

You often say "excuse all mistakes." It is never necessary to apologize for the mistakes you may make in writing. I do not notice them; my heart is not inclined to be your critic in that matter.⁴⁹

Bishop Luers, of Fort Wayne, had always been kind to Madame Bailly in her lifetime. He sent a priest to the Homestead to say Mass at least once a year, and more frequently when he could. He arranged, too, that the requiem Mass was offered for Madame Bailly, Mother Mary Cecilia's mother, in the little chapel there at the first opportunity after her death. He was interested in Rose Bailly Howe's projects, and also in the idea of a school at the Homestead, but he did not hesitate to take a firm stand when he perceived the way events were going. According to traditional accounts, he prevented Sisters from leaving Fort Wayne to join Mother Mary Cecilia, and told Sister Charlotte

Joyce that he would excommunicate her if she tried to go in disobedience to her lawful Superior-General.

In 1870, the Community was offered a school in Plymouth, Indiana, through Mother Mary Cecilia, but she informed Mother Anastasie that the people understood the Sisters were to remain in Chesterton for the year, and they could not transfer to the mission in Plymouth.⁵⁰

At the end of the year 1870,⁵¹ it was clear that the district school would not be given to the Sisters again as strong Protestant opposition had arisen, even though Sister Mary Angèle had received her teaching certificate for another year. Mother Mary Cecilia had returned to St. Mary's for the August retreat of 1870, and a special welcoming committee of Sisters met her at the big gate. She herself thought it a demonstration on the part of the Sisters whereas, in reality, the Sisters had been reminded by Mother Anastasie to be there when Mother Mary Cecilia arrived.

On her return to Chesterton, she found the local situation very unpromising. The undrained areas of stagnant water behind the dunes were causing malaria. The population, composed of Swedish Lutherans and Irish Catholics, suffered greatly, but the hardy constitutions of the Swedes were able to shake off the effects of the fever. The Irish people, never strong in health, succumbed to the fever, and those who survived moved away to avoid another season of illness. The hope of establishing a high school, or a permanent parochial school, was fruitless, as the Community would not give more Sisters, having learned that a separation had been planned. When Mother Mary Cecilia presented the state of affairs to Mother Anastasie, the latter wrote:

As regards the mission of Chesterton, it was accepted because you desired it; and it may be abandoned for the same reason. . . . In my last visit to Fort Wayne, the Bishop commenced speaking of a letter we had written, and of Father Zurwéllen and the advantages of Plymouth. I replied informing him that we had referred the matter to you, and you had declined abandoning Chesterton; nothing more was said on the subject. . . .

In all sincerity, we do assure you of the earnest desires of our hearts that there may exist a better state of feeling, more charitable and more sincere than that which has been practiced till now.

Advice given and letters received have not been what they should have been to promote the interests of the Community and the practice of virtue. My dear Mother, it costs me much to say

this to you — were it possible to satisfy my conscience and rid myself of responsibility before God and in silence, I would certainly say nothing. As it is, I am bound to speak and what can I say except what I know to be true?⁵²

Chesterton does not appear on the Obedience List for 1871, and Mother Mary Cecilia was appointed superior of St. Augustine's, Fort Wayne, accompanied by the faithful Sister Rose.

Mother Mary Cecilia wrote letters to Bishop de Saint-Palais in an endeavor to remove the bad impression he had of her conduct. Few of the earlier letters had been answered, but a final letter of June 3, 1871, indicates that some answer to a recent one had been received. In answer to the charge that she intended to leave the Community and establish a foundation at the Bailly Homestead, she says:

Should present authority be so objectionable that it would be necessary to have another, a third person would answer better the exigency than myself, as those who have confidence in the one would not have it in the other; and thus the divided feeling would be perpetuated to the great harm of the sisterhood. Moreover, as I have now lost your esteem and paternal feeling (for which I am not without grieving) and I suppose that of Father Corbe as well, it would not be fitting that I should occupy a place which ought to be filled by someone in good odor with yourself and the Reverend Superior. . . .

These observations of mine may sound as if I were going to take leave of the community; you judged so once from what I said in a letter. To do away forever with any such misunderstanding, I will declare that I know nothing in this world which could separate me from my community. Should I unfortunately become an evil to it, and that a thing so sad would happen as to require the necessity of turning me out, I would have to be removed from it by a moral amputation like a limb that is cut off from a body, for of myself I am so wedded to my religious family that death only will sever me from it. All I desire is to live in oblivion and pass the few years that may remain to me in obscurity, preparing myself for death.⁵³

Mother Anastasie Elected for Second Term

At the election of 1871, after excluding the Superior General and the First Assistant from the session, the Bishop read excerpts from Mother

Mary Cecilia's letters to individual Sisters disclosing her plan of separation. One of the Chapter members asked if these were copies or originals, and asked to see the originals. The Bishop answered that these were copies, but that he himself had seen originals which were as blamable as these were. He became very much excited, and knowing that some members of the Chapter were devotees of Mother Mary Cecilia, he said: "If you wish to elect Mother Mary Cecilia, you may do so; but if you do, you will ruin your Community."⁵⁴

In face of such stern speech, the faction did not assert itself strongly. Four ballots were necessary before a Superior-General was elected and Mother Mary Cecilia's name appeared on the slate each time. On the fourth ballot, Mother Anastasie was re-elected by a plurality of one-third of the votes. The Bishop's voice was the determining factor, and he declared her elected.

The Bishop's words and action were no doubt relayed to Mother Mary Cecilia, as from that time on there were no letters to the Bishop, and at her own request, Mother Mary Cecilia was not assigned to any place in the Vincennes diocese until after Bishop de Saint-Palais' death.

After Mother Anastasie's re-election, the trouble continued. Although she was no longer in a neutral zone, one might say, Mother Mary Cecilia continued in Fort Wayne her plan to form a separate community in the Diocese of Fort Wayne, and probably return to the Bailly Homestead. When Bishop Dwenger, newly-consecrated Bishop of Fort Wayne in 1872, heard of this plan, he took vigorous action, and informed her that if she pursued her intention, he would report her to the Holy See. Thereupon the whole project stopped.⁵⁵

Some names have been mentioned in the course of quoting correspondence. In general, the faction consisted of outspoken and indignant defenders of Mother Mary Cecilia, and some others who were mere sympathizers. It seems pointless to list the mistaken members of the Community who afterwards proved their loyalty by long years of service, although rather complete information is available in the archives. It is known also that many were approached and invited to join the group, but a goodly number of these approached refused to have anything to do with the plan. The information came to the Community through a priest who had been consulted and who understood the grave nature of the affair.⁵⁶

Not until the administration of Mother Mary Ephrem (1874-1883)

was there any perceptible softening of Mother Mary Cecilia's attitude. The successors of Mother Anastasie had been trained by Mother Mary Cecilia and she did not experience the feeling of rivalry or competition which had perhaps unconsciously influenced her actions.

As time goes on, we shall see her entering again into the Community's interest and history, but never fully reconciled. Many passages of her letters had, in the trouble years, contained discourses on the difference between the direct and the permissive Will of God, and how much greater merit one would obtain by submitting to the permissive Will of God, since God was allowing creatures to follow their own will, and not preventing them.⁵⁷

NOTES — CHAPTER VIII

1. Mother Mary Cecilia's Diary, December 21, 1866.
2. *Ibid.*, July 31, 1866.
3. Quoted in the Epilogue to *The Journals and Letters*, p. 141.
4. Book of the Foundations, August 23, 1866.
5. Acts of the Particular Council, August 3, 1866.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 143.
7. Historical Map of Will County, Illinois, Joliet *Herald News*, January 4, 1950.
8. Walter M. Metler, Radio Broadcast, *History of Monee, Illinois*, November 8, 1939. Cf. *Joliet Herald News*, January 4, 1950.
9. George A. Brennan, *Wonders of the Dunes*, (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1923), p. 105.
10. Joel Wicker to W. B. Ogden, March 13, 1837. Bailly Papers, Indiana Historical Library, Indianapolis.
11. Diary, February 9, 1867.
12. *Ibid.*, May 8, 1867.
13. *Ibid.*, May 13, 1867.
14. *Ibid.*, September 16, 1867.
15. *Ibid.*, March 2, 1867.
16. *Ibid.*, April 12, 1868.
17. Necrology, "Sister Mary Rose O'Donaghue," June 22, 1868.
18. Yearbook 1976, Archdiocese of Indianapolis, p. 72.
19. Necrology, "Death of Sister John Francis O'Donaghue," Oct. 13, 1920.
20. Sister M. Eudoxie Marshall to Sallie M. Rand, August 29, 1868.
21. "Yes, St. Joseph, the true children of Mary are also your children."
22. These statues have been replaced. In 1910, a marble statue of the Blessed Virgin replaced Our Lady of the Woods, and on May 23, 1923 metal statues replaced St. Joseph and St. Margaret Mary.
23. Mother Mary Cecilia to Bishop de Saint-Palais, July 2, 1868.

24. *Ibid.*, March 29, 1871.
25. Hailandière à Audran, 3 novembre, 1868. NDUA.
26. Mother Anastasie à Mère Marie, 28 octobre, 1868. S.M.W.A.
27. Mère Marie à Mère Mary Cecilia, 7 septembre, 1858. S.M.W.A.
28. Book of Important Events, 1840-1880, p. 145, S.M.W.A.
29. Sister Basilide à Mère Marie, 20 juillet, 1867. S.M.W.A.
30. Report of August 5, 1867.
31. Sister Basilide à Mère Marie, 20 janvier, 1869. S.M.W.A.
32. Book of Important Events, 1840-1880, p. 144. S.M.W.A.
33. Sister Eugenia Gorman to an unidentified Sister. No date. S.M.W.A.
34. Mother Anastasie to Sister Eugenia Gorman, Letter #25, March 31, 1869. S.M.W.A.
35. Mother Mary Cecilia to Mother Anastasie, August 4, 1869. S.M.W.A.
36. Sister Rose Haag, employed in household work, had taken care of all Mother Mary Cecilia's needs for many years.
37. August 14, 1869. S.M.W.A.
38. Mother Mary Cecilia to Mother Anastasie, August 18, 1869.
39. Mother Mary Cecilia to Bishop de Saint-Palais, August 18, 1869.
40. Mother Mary Cecilia to Father Corbe, September 1, 1869.
41. Brown, *History*, I, 754-755.
42. Mother Mary Cecilia to Mother Anastasie, August 17, 1869.
43. *Ibid.*, August 24, 1869.
44. *Ibid.*, August 24, 1869.
45. Mother Mary Cecilia to Bishop de Saint-Palais, August 31, 1869.
46. She entered Community May 31, 1875, and died March 30, 1916.
47. Mother Mary Cecilia to Mother Anastasie, January 15, 1870.
48. Mother Mary Cecilia to Sister Mary Francis Guthneck at Jasper, March 30, 1870.
49. Mother Mary Cecilia to Mother Anastasie, May 17, 1870.
50. *Ibid.*, December 15, 1870.
51. *Ibid.*, December 26, 1870.
52. Mother Anastasie to Mother Mary Cecilia, January 2, 1871. #27.
53. Mother Mary Cecilia to Bishop de Saint-Palais, May 23, 1871.
54. Book of Important Events, 1840-1880, p. 161.
55. These facts were given by Sister Margaret Donelan (1895-1949) who had them from her aunt, Sister Mary Ellen (1875-1932). The latter had lived with Mother Mary Cecilia for a number of years at St. Ann's Asylum, Terre Haute.
56. Sister Mary Theodosia's Notes. MS.
57. Mother Mary Cecilia's *Defense*, written in 1876 at Mother Mary Ephrem's request. MS.

CHAPTER IX

Providence Hospital Begun Bishop de Saint-Palais Attends Vatican Council

Purchase of Madison Hotel. Jeffersonville. Mother Mary Resigns.

The painful circumstances narrated in the preceding chapter did not augur a peaceful administration for the newly-elected Superior-General. Her name had recurred in the early history of the Community in Indiana as pupil at the Institute, postulant, novice, directress of the Institute, local superior, and First Assistant. She referred to herself as the first American child in the Community, meaning that she was the first postulant who was a third generation American, the ancestors of the Brown family having come to Maryland on the *Ark and the Dove*.¹

Tall, stately, and distinguished looking, but never beautiful, Mother Anastasie had the bearing and the manners of a queen, but had also the sensitive heart and the affability of a true mother. She had always inspired love and trust in the Sisters who knew her, for her humility and simplicity made her highly esteemed. Unfortunately, as events turned out, the sympathy of all of the Sisters was not at first with her. The secrecy which seemed to attend her election, and the surprise in the change of administration, created feelings of distrust which persisted for some months.

Sister Mary Joseph supported Mother Anastasie, perhaps a little too forcibly, during this period of strain. Sister Mary Ambrose who had been elected Second Assistant, resigned from that office with the Bishop's permission on the day following the election. She was then named Superior at St. Augustine's, Fort Wayne, replacing Sister Margaret Mary Brett who had been appointed to succeed Mother Anastasie as superior of the Institute. Sister Mary Ambrose took time before her departure to initiate Sister Mary Basile O'Donnell and Sister Angelina Mackin into the respective duties of secretary and buyer.

Changes were effected almost at once, disregarding the old and safe rule that no changes should be made during the first six months of a new administration. The office of the econome, or business manager of the estate, was moved to its former location, and immediate alterations

projected for the Institute. Sister Basilide, the econome, was busy in her new-old quarters, for the crops were fine, the vintage especially good, and all pointed to a prosperous year.

Fort Wayne Welcomes the Poor Handmaids

News from Fort Wayne told of the advent of a new group of Sisters who came from Germany to establish a motherhouse, hospital, and schools in northern Indiana, and to help care for the needs of the German people in the Fort Wayne diocese. At Bishop Luers' request, the first contingent of the Poor Handmaids of Christ was welcomed by Sister Mary Ambrose on August 28, 1868. They were to take their meals with the Sisters of Providence at St. Augustine's, and Father Koenig, of St. Paul's Rectory, was to provide for their lodging.² Very soon the Bishop gave them the old Rockhill House near Main and Broadway as their motherhouse and the nucleus for their hospital.³ On May 4, 1869, St. Joseph's hospital, Fort Wayne, began its glorious career of service.

Increasing population in Indiana brought requests for more schools. Jeffersonville, Indiana, was the first venture in September, 1869. Mother Anastasie, accompanied by Sister Gertrude Sherlock, Sister Mary Augusta Sermersheim, and Sister Mary Ignatia Delaney, a novice, found Father Ernest Audran ready to receive them. He had vacated his own house for the convent and school, and had done all in his power to make the undertaking a success. Many children were waiting to enroll, and more were promised as soon as accommodations were made for them. A large portion of the population was black, and although these black children did not attend the regular school, the Sisters cast about for ways to help those who came for instruction. Classes in reading, writing, and principles of religion were opened for them on Sunday after Mass, and the Sisters felt well repaid for the energy expended in the eagerness with which the children responded.

Progress in Evansville

The visitation of the missions continued, and everywhere the growing population indicated that more schools and more teachers would soon be required. Shortly after Mother Anastasie's visit to Evansville in the fall of 1868, Sister Gonzague Graves wrote Mother Anastasie of the Christmas activities at Assumption school:

We moved into the new school about two weeks after you were here. . . . Father Bishop was in Evansville and honored us with a visit. It was at the time of the exit from the old school and the entrance into the new one.

We prepared a Christmas program for the parents, complete with an ornamented tree and presents for the orphans. The stage was festooned with evergreens. As soon as everything was ready, I resigned my charge to Miss Osburn and the other ladies who had decorated the rooms. This morning Father McDermott told me the room was packed and that many could not get in the schoolroom. He said the children spoke their pieces with credit to us. The editor of the *Courier* had told him that he never spent a more agreeable afternoon. . . .

According to your advice, I sent all the little ones to Confession before Christmas; . . . as for the girls who have made their First Holy Communion, they go to Confession regularly. I think all are good children. . . .

Sister Alphonse has her new crib in the church, representing the city of Bethlehem on a mountain, below which is the grotto containing the crib.

Final items added by Sister Gonzague were that some of the Sisters had colds, all were mending their clothes, and as for herself her greatest mortification was not to take a book to the table. A book was as good as a meal to her. Christmas had been a happy time. The parishioners were very good to them; in fact, they received three turkeys, two from the parish, and one from Sister Gonzague's sister. She said she herself rarely lost her temper, but feared it was not virtue, as the Sisters in the house were all so amiable.

September, 1869, marked the opening of the new mission at Calumet, Indiana, or Chesterton, as it is now called. The details of this foundation have been covered in the preceding chapter, and need not be repeated here. A school at Valparaiso, Indiana, which Mother Mary Cecilia had been urging, had to put off in order to solidify the foundation at Richmond, Indiana.

Mother Anastasie's affability made approach to her so very easy that many new and ambitious projects were laid before her. Her temperament was an optimistic one, and new fields and new occasions of doing good were most attractive to her. Bishop de Saint-Palais had felt that Indianapolis was in need of a Catholic hospital more adequate than St.

John's Home for Invalids. The Infirmary, as it was called, originally intended to care for invalid veterans, needed extensive improvements before it could serve as a hospital if, indeed, any rehabilitation were possible. The number of patients was diminishing and the current opinion in Indianapolis was that the Infirmary was no longer needed since the Military Hospital, lately returned to the civic authorities, was in operation as the city hospital. In addition, the Sisters' quarters in the Infirmary were said to be rapidly becoming uninhabitable and the building could not be used as a convent. Mother Anastasie, visiting Indianapolis for the purpose of investigation, found the situation bad enough but not so bad as it had been reported. Mother then proposed to the Council her idea of removing the Infirmary from Indianapolis to Terre Haute. Some of the Sisters favored the idea; some opposed it on the ground that it might be offensive to the Indianapolis people and do harm to St. John's Academy which now had a good start.

Bishop de Saint-Palais, reluctant to give up the idea of the hospital in Indianapolis, encouraged Mother Anastasie to ask for help from the charity of the people for a new site in Indianapolis. Mother Anastasie had in mind a desirable location on East Street, a portion of the Fletcher property which could be purchased at a reasonable price. However, the Bishop advised her not to buy unless she was certain of help.⁴ Mother Anastasie and Sister Basilide called on some people in Terre Haute and within three hours had promises of \$1,500. During the day they had chanced to meet Mr. Chauncey Rose, a philanthropist and benefactor of Terre Haute, who gave them \$1,000. Mr. Rose's interest being chiefly in Terre Haute, he offered to donate a five-acre lot and a substantial sum if the hospital were located in Terre Haute. The Community was delighted at the thought of opening a hospital in Terre Haute as well as in Indianapolis.⁵

Almost at the same time, news from Indianapolis reported enthusiastic interest in the new hospital in that town. So encouraged was Mother Anastasie by the interest shown in Indianapolis that she purchased the Fletcher property on East Street for the sum of \$26,000 paying \$2,000 down and giving notes for the rest. The purchase was completed on July 31, 1869.

Mr. Rose Donates Liberally to Providence Hospital

Mr. Rose then offered to add \$12,000 to his original gift if the Sisters would withdraw from Indianapolis. This they could not do as it was the

wish of the Bishop and the Indianapolis clergy that the Indianapolis need should also be met.⁶ Mr. Rose did not withdraw his offer of help in Terre Haute, but advised the Sisters not to use the Community funds or a common fund to build the two hospitals, but to let each town take care of itself. This was easy indeed for Mother Anastasie to promise as the Community funds were usually adequate for annual expenses, with very little over and above. Later, Mr. Rose gave an additional \$5,000 and later another \$13,000. He urged commencing soon, and promised to turn over the site as soon as the crop of clover would be cut.⁷

With this encouragement plans moved rapidly in Terre Haute. Mother Anastasie drew up a tentative sketch of the hospital and submitted it to Mr. Rose. Mr. William B. Tuell, Mr. Rose's lawyer, recommended an architect, Mr. J. A. Vrydaugh, formerly employed by Mr. Rose. Mr. Rose himself pronounced the building too expensive, and the architect suggested changes. The cost was to be brought down to \$20,000. Lumber and bricks were contracted for, and the building project, stimulated by Mr. Rose's moral and financial support, began to take form.

Mr. Vrydaugh, the architect selected, had during his career a number of excellent buildings to his credit: the first St. Joseph Church, the Terre Haute Opera House, and the old Normal Building, the cornerstone of which was laid on May 7, 1867, were handsome structures in their day.⁸

The Terre Haute papers announced Providence Hospital as a certainty on May 11, 1869. On June 8, the deed for the site, Thirteenth Street and Fifth Avenue, was received. On June 9, 1869, a Mr. Gerald of Terre Haute eulogized the project in the *Terre Haute Journal*. The digging of the foundation began on July 12, and on September 20, 1869, the cornerstone was laid by Bishop de Saint-Palais, and the address of the day delivered by Father John O'Reilly of St. Louis. The customary coins, medals, and current newspapers with items referring to the hospital, were placed in the cornerstone.

The work begun under such favorable circumstances was interrupted several times by a shortage of money, and the usual seasonal delays in building. Mother Anastasie discontinued the begging tours as she saw the Sisters did not have the genius or ability for that type of work. Mr. Rose added money generously until his contributions amounted to \$31,500.

Mr. Chauncey Rose deserves a greater eulogy than it is possible to

give him in these pages. A man wholly devoted to philanthropy, he had amassed a fortune honestly in real estate and in careful investments. He loved Terre Haute, and its welfare was close to his heart. Neutral in religious sympathy, he gave freely to institutions that would benefit humanity without distinction of creed. The first hotel in the town, the Prairie House, later the Terre Haute House, was built through his initiative, the Rose Dispensary, and the Rose Home for the Aged and for Orphans, were established and endowed. Countless other benefactions were freely given to the town that had become the central interest of his life since his first coming there in 1818.

As a consequence, his interest and support were strong factors in the hospital project. He was constantly concerned about the building but, like all other pioneer patrons of enterprises, had to wait until the winter was over for progress to be made.

Everywhere change and progress were in motion. The post-war inflation and urge toward expansion was noticeable in every aspect of life, particularly in educational ventures.

The Sisters of Providence Buy Madison Hotel

The Diary notes briefly on March 17, 1869, "Our new house at Madison was blessed today." The old nine-room house at the corner of Third and Broadway which had been turned over to the Sisters for a convent and school in 1844⁹ had long before become very dilapidated. In the attempt to provide an adequate home for the Sisters and a place for a school, Mother Anastasie looked about for a suitable location. Encouraged by the good reports and urging of Mr. Daniel Doherty, Father Dupontavice, and other good friends, Mother Anastasie consented to look into the matter of buying the Madison Hotel on Second and Mulberry Streets. The exterior of the hotel was plain and dignified, and its interior was carefully planned for its ultimate purpose. The beautiful foyer, the grand staircase, and the large reception rooms could easily be adapted to the needs of a young ladies' academy. The stamp of good construction which was characteristic of all large buildings in Madison was clearly discernible here. It was not surprising that at the time of its erection, not too long before 1869, it was evaluated at \$60,000. Mr. Bohlen inspected the building and pronounced \$15,000, the price asked for it, as very low.

Mr. Doherty was authorized to make the purchase for the Commu-

nity. He himself donated one thousand dollars by cancelling an account due him for that amount from the proprietor, and thus reducing the cost to \$14,000. The old property at Third and Broadway was sold for \$3,500.¹⁰ The hotel was then purchased partly by cash payment, and the remainder secured by notes.¹¹ But the hotel was not fitted up for a school, and further expenditure was necessary in order to equip it.

Father Dupontavice was very enthusiastic about the new project. The day chosen for the blessing was his birthday as well as the national feast of many of his parishioners. Bishop de Saint-Palais had been invited to preach and to bless the house, but he could not come. Father Dupontavice, assisted by his curate and several priests, carried out the ceremony. He wrote to Bishop de la Hailandière an account of the day.

We had Mass at St. Michael's and following it, seven hundred children marched in procession through the principal streets, carrying banners, and led by a brass band. The German pastor, Father Brandt, and I closed the procession in my carriage. The streets were filled with spectators and when we arrived at the hotel, the crowd was very large for a little city of twelve thousand souls. The Sisters are now installed, and next year they will have a boarding school. I hope the good God Who has favored them so much thus far will complete His work. Truly, when the Sisters spoke of their resolution to build without a sou in these hard times, I thought them out of their minds, but I said, "Let us pray to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and His holy Mother!" Well, in less time than three months, a superb building is theirs already built, and more than a quarter of the debt met and within six months the Sisters are installed in the house. I cannot help but see in all that the Finger of God.¹²

Madison had an ideal location. Situated on the high bluffs of a great bend in the beautiful Ohio River, the little town commanded a magnificent view. There were wealthy people here, but they were not the Catholic population. Fortunes had been made in commerce, in meat packing, and in the traffic in sugar, rum, silks, tea, all coming up the long river passages from the port at New Orleans, or going east like the beef and pork exports. The wealth was reflected in the homes, and many of the stately mansions were examples of the purest Greek architecture of the Greek revival. The classic perfection of these structures was due to the famous architect, Francis Costigan, whom the Laniers had interested in coming to Madison. The Lanier home, the St.

Paul Protestant Church, the Costigan home, and the Shrewsbury House, with its famous free-standing spiral staircase, remain today monuments to Costigan's genius.¹³ To leisurely grace and the pure lines of its homes, Madison added additional beauty in its scenic variety. Tall and spreading trees, rich shrubbery which grew exuberantly under casual care, the hills and the abrupt rise and fall of the landscape, all contributed to gain for Madison the name, "The Switzerland of America."

It was indeed a town with attractive surroundings, and it is not strange that Mother Anastasie hoped to provide an academy for Catholic girls, and a suitable home for the Sisters. But there were still many handicaps which soon made themselves apparent. The convent and school were a mile away from the church, business which had depended on the river trade was now declining because of the rapid overland carriers, only a few of the Catholic families could afford the luxury of a boarding school, and the large hotel, although furnished at an additional outlay of \$4,000, was not the drawing card that it had been expected it would be. The spacious hotel seemed emptier when the few children came into its echoing halls. These drawbacks were not considered at first, but time was to underline the imprudence of this venture.

Among the Sisters on the faculty of the new Holy Angels Academy during different years were: Sister Mary Stanislaus Hayes, Sister Mary John Hetfield, Sister Mary Therese Schmidt, Sister Mary Albertine Sondermann, and Sister Mary Ursula Fearn.

Sister Mary Stanislaus was loved by all the children. It has been said of her that her features were plain and unattractive, but that when she smiled her face was illumined by rare beauty. One Sister related that when she was a child she loved to invent errands that made it necessary to pass and repass the Sisters in order to receive each time the Superior's beautiful smile.¹⁴

The days at Holy Angels Academy were happy ones. To quote one old pupil:

I like to walk through the cemetery when I come to Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, and visit the graves of the dear Sisters who taught in Madison at the Holy Angels Academy. Sister Mary Eudoxie was one of the Superiors, and Mother Anastasie came there to visit. I remember her so tall and slender. When we were in Madison last fall, we stayed at the Madison Hotel. Mr. Kane,

the manager, said that the hotel was quite old and had borne different names. I told him I had gone there when it was called Holy Angels Academy. I spent many days in that building, but this was my first night.¹⁵

The Holy Angels Academy struggled on for a few years, and then had to be closed. The idea of an academy was given up, and the parish school returned to its former quarters, leaving the Community burdened with a heavy debt and a useless building which interested no buyers.

St. Augustine's, Jeffersonville

Readjustments in the endeavor to provide a suitable convent in Jeffersonville demanded extra expenditure. The first arrangements to open the school were not satisfactory. The house and lot which were selected by Father Audran were found to be unsuitable. The proposition made by Bishop de Saint-Palais was to deed the property to the Sisters in return for an annuity of \$120 paid to him during his lifetime. This did not seem feasible, due to the conditions at the school. When the Sisters took up their residence, they had a small house as a convent, but the building which was to be used as a school had two rooms arranged for the boys, but no provision for the girls.

Mother Anastasie saw that larger quarters were needed for both convent and school, as two rooms had to be set aside for the girls in the convent. The Hall property, across the street from the proposed building was bought by Mother Anastasie as a convent for \$12,000. No action was begun for the building of a school, and the Sisters gave two rooms for the girls in the convent. The situation remained the same until 1913, when Mother Mary Cleophas, to remove the inconvenience which had continued for almost forty years, requested Father O'Connell to find other accommodations for the girls. The girls were then lodged in the Odd Fellows' Building until a new school was built in 1915 under Reverend Michael Halpin.

While the purchase of the Hall property provided a large convent for the Sisters, it put a heavy debt on the Community. The debt was finally met, and the property remained in the possession of the Sisters of Providence until a sale was effected,¹⁶ and in 1924 the Dominican

Sisters of St. Catherine, Kentucky, took over the premises of the beloved "Jeff."

The summer of 1869 brought a decision to do nothing further about the Institute plans, but to do more on the missions which needed help. Father Dominic Niederkorn, S.J., came to give the August retreat which opened on a solemn note. In the late afternoon of August 7, the sun went into total eclipse, a phenomenon completely visible as it so seldom is, in the Middle West. The chronicler says of it:

This is a day which will be long remembered on account of the magnificent spectacle it provided, a total eclipse of the sun. About 5 p.m., the shadow was plainly discernible on the sun, and in half an hour, the obscuration was complete. There was darkness as at night, the little birds flew to rest, and several stars were plainly visible . . . This total darkness lasted about seven minutes, then the sunlight shot forth and the birds seeing their mistake, began to twitter and fly about and the stars quietly withdrew from sight. One lovely feature in that splendid scene was the fairylike penciling of the shadows of the trees during the few moments immediately preceding and following the total obscuration of the sun.¹⁷

The Holy Father had proclaimed a Jubilee in thanksgiving for his safe return from exile at Gaeta during the Italian Government occupation of Rome. At St. Mary's, Father Gaudentius, C.P., began to preach the Jubilee on February 4, 1870. He blessed the sick Sisters with a relic of St. Paul of the Cross and enrolled the Sisters in the Scapular of the Passion. The Jubilee concluded with the Papal Benediction and the blessing of religious articles. So many people, religious and lay, came to visit Father Gaudentius that he had to leave at 5 p.m., having had no time to take his dinner. According to a postulant who was present at the exercises, Father Gaudentius was a believer in atmosphere and carried austerity much farther than the younger members of the audience cared for. He insisted on all shades and curtains being drawn in the chapel so that the place was as dark as a tomb while the lectures were being given. Even the organist had to play by ear as he would not permit her to pull back the curtains to see the musical score. The youngest postulant had the duty of preparing the censer for Benediction when no altar boy was present. She had to kneel on the step outside the sanctuary, and manage to keep the coals lighted and the censer ready for the officiating priest who took it from her and returned it.¹⁸

The Bishop Attends Vatican Council One

On September 21, immediately after the blessing of the cornerstone of Providence Hospital, Bishop de Saint-Palais left for Rome and France to attend the Vatican Council. The Bishop's health was very poor, and his priests feared that the trip would be too hard on him. The Bishop felt the seriousness of representing the thought of his clergy, and was convinced that he should make a superhuman effort to attend. News came at intervals to Father Corbe, the Vicar General, that the Bishop had indeed been ill while he was traveling through France, but that he did reach Rome safely.

The Bishop's health improved somewhat in Rome, and while there are no accounts of his stay in Rome in his own letters, Abbé Azais has given a first-hand account of some items:

During the Vatican Council, Bishop de Saint-Palais was lodged in the North American Seminary where most of his colleagues from the United States were. This establishment had at its head Dr. Chatard, Chamberlain of His Holiness, Pius IX. Now this young prelate, no less brilliant than he was modest, was the same one whom Bishop de Saint-Palais had known as a young boy in Baltimore, who was to be his successor, and whose grandfather, Dr. Pierre Chatard of San Domingo, had sustained in 1788 his thesis before the faculty of medicine of Montpellier, as the old registers of the school testify. This young rector was for the Bishop of Vincennes, on account of his French origin, a friend and almost a compatriot, and it was with joy that he accepted the hospitality of the American College. Only a poor room resembling the cell of a religious could be given him. Its entire furniture consisted of a small table and some cane bottom chairs. It was the only available room. The other rooms which were more comfortable had been given to the American bishops who had arrived first. Bishop de Saint-Palais accepted his lot with great glee and good humor. He played host in his little chamber with the greatest charm and ease. When there were several visitors and there were seated on the bed or on his traveling trunk, and all shared the gaiety of the Bishop.¹⁹

On July 22, 1870, Father Corbe received a letter from Bishop de Saint-Palais, still in Rome, containing the approbation of our Community which he had received from the Pope. In the joy attendant upon the receipt of this news, it was mistakenly thought that the Rule had

been approved, but that was not true. It was simply the approval of the Congregation as a religious body with no action on the Rule. By this approbation, the Sisters were entitled to the same religious favors and indulgences granted to the Community at Ruillé. Because of the difficulty of reaching Bishop de Saint-Palais in Europe, Sister Mary Joseph wrote to Bishop Fillion of Le Mans, asking for an explanation. Bishop Fillion answered thus:

My very dear daughter in Christ,

It is quite easy for me to give you information respecting the meaning and the extent of the privileges contained in the document about which you have written, as the Bishop of Vincennes, before presenting it to the Congregation of the Propaganda, had given it to me to read, and the Secretary of said Congregation had spoken of it to me previous to his laying it before the Holy Father.

It has nothing at all to do with your Rule; of which the Bishop made no mention in his demands. They remain as they were before, and consequently, may be modified by the Ordinary. Bishop de Saint-Palais did not deem it advisable to ask for their approval because he feared that the changes which might be made in them would not be conformable with the usages of the country, and would embarrass you in the fulfillment of your duties.

His Lordship limited himself to ask for your Community all the Indulgences and spiritual favors granted to the Sisters of Providence at Ruillé, although you are independent of them, and your Rules differ in some points from the Rules that have been approved for them. This is what has been accorded to you. The result is nevertheless an authentic recognition and approval of your Community for the Holy See grants Indulgences only to those institutes which it recognizes and approves; but this approbation of the Community differs from the approbation of the Rules.

Please, my dear daughter, offer my best wishes to your good Bishop whose acquaintance I was so happy to form while at Rome, your Reverend Superior, Father Corbe, with whom I should be happy to become acquainted, and to your Mother Superior. With my blessing, I recommend myself to your prayers.

†Charles, Bishop of LeMans²⁰

April 1, 1871

When *Le Monde* appeared, it listed the Bishops who had voted in favor of Papal Infallibility. Bishop de Saint-Palais' name was not included and Sister Mary Joseph wrote to Father Audran to ask about this matter. Father Audran answered immediately, enclosing a copy of the letter of protest which Bishop de Saint-Palais had sent to the editor of *Le Monde*. Father Audran expressed his surprise that *Le Monde* had not reproduced the Bishop's letter. The letter was published in *L'Univers* which had also not included the Bishop's name, stating that it regretted the omission but that the list of the names of the Bishops had been sent in by the opposition party, and that errors had been reported. Bishop de Saint-Palais' letter of protest read as follows:

The Editor,

You have drawn from a poor source of information which has put my name on the list of Bishops opposed to the definition of the infallibility of the Sovereign Pontiff. In the general congregation of June 13th as in the public session of the 18th, I voted PLACET without any restrictions. I have always preferred silence to publicity, but I feel myself today compelled to break it to demand the correction without delay of an error which if it were to spread abroad would produce an unhappy impression on my clergy who share with me the conviction which I was very happy to affirm when the occasion of doing so presented itself. I doubt that it would be suitable to mention in the public papers the Bishops who were opposed to a dogma which had not yet been defined; but in any case, a journalist should look before compromising a name, however humble it might seem to be, if it has no place in public information.

Your obedient servant,

†Maurice d'Aussac de Saint-Palais
Bishop of Vincennes

Father Audran adds a final note: "This letter shows that the feeling is not worth regarding."²¹

In his letter previously quoted, Bishop Fillion had added some details regarding the sad condition of France during the occupation of the Prussians, and remarked that for the preceding seven months the people had lived in the midst of mourning and tears. There was not a family that had not felt either the ravages of the war or of the epidemic.

The French had to minister to the wants of from three to four thousand soldiers either sick or wounded in Le Mans, and the city was occupied by foreign troops. Exorbitant taxes were assessed and even the Bishop's residence was destroyed by fire, owing to the imprudence of the Prussians who lodged there. "Nothing remains of my episcopal residence but the walls; all besides is lost. My library and that of the episcopal residence, and all my papers. God has given me the grace to be resigned in the midst of so much trouble and so many losses."

Somewhat later, letters and circulars came from Mother Mary in France. The circulars were three in number — one listing the twenty-nine Sisters who had died since September 1870 to May, 1871, many of them martyrs of charity, worn out with caring for the wounded and dying in the war. The other two circulars related to the coming election. Mother Mary announced that she would not be a candidate for the office and that a new Superior-General and also a new Secretary would have to be elected as the former Secretary had died in office. Mother Mary explained that she was seventy-eight years old and very infirm. In the letter she thanked also for alms of 750 francs sent in the Community's name by Mlle. Eugénie Le Fer.²²

Mother Mary, however, did not describe the heroism of one of her daughters, Sister Jeanne de Chantal Tollet, who faced and repelled a mob who were going to shoot the innocent people who had taken refuge in the convent yard, nor the incredible hardships undergone by the French Sisters.²³

1871 closed on a happy note for the Sisters of Providence in the completion of the English translation of the Rule, and the approbation of the translation by Bishop de Saint-Palais. On December 20, 1871, His Lordship approved the English translation of the Rule, and later came to St. Mary's to write on prepared paper the same approbation, a copy of which was sent to Strowbridge and Company to have facsimile impressions made from it.²⁴ The English translation was printed by Kelly, Piet and Company, Baltimore. Several copies still extant bear the approbation in the Bishop's own handwriting:

Having examined this revised edition of the Constitutions and Rules of the Sisters of Providence, we do hereby approve the same and order them to be strictly observed.

†Maurice de Saint-Palais
Bishop of Vincennes

Vincennes, December 20, 1871

There were some slight changes noted in the English edition, but most of these had already been in effect for some years, such, for instance, as the substitution of the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin for the Office of the Sacred Heart of Mary. It was expected that further modifications would have to be adopted and presented to the Holy See before the first step to Pontifical approval could be obtained.

NOTES — CHAPTER IX

1. The ship that brought the Maryland settlers to America under the grant given to the Calverts on March 25, 1634. George Brown is listed on the ship's manifest.
2. George T. Meagher, C.S.C., *With Attentive Ear and Courageous Heart: Biography of Mother Mary Kasper* (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1957), p. 180.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 184. The motherhouse was moved to Donaldson, Indiana, in 1923.
4. Community Diary, April 3, 1869.
5. *Ibid.*, April 7, 1869.
6. *Ibid.*, April 23, 1869.
7. Important Events, 1840-1880, p. 152. S.M.W.A.
8. A.R. Markle, in *Terre Haute Star Tribune*, November 6, 1949.
9. Brown, *History*, I, 363.
10. Community Diary, March 22, 1870.
11. Important Events, 1840-1880, pp. 150-151.
12. Dupontavice à Bishop de la Hailandière, 14 mai, 1869. NDUA.
13. *Indianapolis Star Magazine*, August 12, 1951.
14. Reminiscences of Sister Mary Josephine Murtaugh to the author, quoted in *God's Acre*, p 188.
15. Mrs. Frank Gallagher, grandmother of Mrs. William A. Brennan, Jr., '39 and Mrs. Robert Langsenkamp, '39.
16. Important Events, 1914-1941, p. 211.
17. Important Events, 1840-1880, p. 151.
18. Reminiscences of Sister Celestine Bloomer.
19. Azais, *Biographical Sketch*, pp. 133-134.
20. Monseigneur Fillion à Soeur Marie Joseph, 1 avril, 1871. S.M.W.A.
21. E. Audran à Soeur Marie Joseph, 16 septembre, 1870. S.M.W.A.
22. Community Diary, August 28, 1871.
23. Alric, *Histoire des Soeurs de la Providence*, p. 200.
24. Community Diary, February 21, 1872.
25. Diocesan Approval of English translation of our Rule, December 20, 1871.

CHAPTER X

Father Corbe Dies. Franciscan Fathers Open a Boys' High School.

The Little Sisters of the Poor Come to Indianapolis.

Saint Mary-of-the-Woods and its rectory continued to be as always a happy meeting place for the clergy of the diocese. Reverend John Sondermann, Reverend J. B. Chassé, and Reverend Meinrad, O.S.B., met at the chaplain's residence to celebrate the various anniversaries of their respective ordinations. Whether Father Corbe was there or not, the reverend gentlemen felt very much at home in the place where they were always welcome.

Father Corbe's increasing disabilities were noticeable. Reverend Eugene McBarron had been appointed on July 8, 1871, to be pastor of the village church. Up to this time, both the convent and the village were under Father Corbe's care, unless a chance visiting priest gave him some assistance. Had not Father McBarron been appointed, there would frequently have been no Mass offered as Father Corbe was often too ill to officiate. Even the customary celebration on St. John's Eve had to be omitted several years in succession. At the times of exhibitions and commencement, it was noticeable that Father Corbe seldom stayed for the whole function.

On Trinity Sunday, May 26, 1872, Father Corbe said the second Mass. He suffered so intensely that it was with great difficulty he could complete the Holy Sacrifice, a low Mass which lasted almost an hour. To many of the Sisters it seemed as if the first notes of this dear Father's requiem were sounding. As sick as he was, he was bent on coming to Vespers. But Father McBarron came at two o'clock, so that at three Father Corbe was told that he need not come as Vespers and Benediction were over. By a strange coincidence Father Corbe said his last Mass on the fortieth anniversary of his first Mass on Trinity Sunday, 1832.

The physician confirmed the Sisters' fears, for he stated that the patient might sustain an apoplectic stroke at any time. Father was indeed failing and help was needed to take care of him. Father John

Kroeger, a Franciscan from St. Benedict's, Terre Haute, came to offer his services, and Charles Guthneck from Sainte Marie, Illinois, an old and devoted friend, was summoned to stay with the sick priest.

It was hard to persuade Father that he needed rest, and any thought of not being able to perform his duties made him melancholy. Sister Mary Joseph asked him to join in a novena by receiving Holy Communion in honor of our Lady of the Sacred Heart. He answered, "Receive Holy Communion — how?" for he did not think he was sick enough to receive It as Viaticum. Sister answered, "The privilege you give others, I think you might grant to yourself." He did not seem willing that night, but said he would receive Holy Communion fasting the next day.

On June 1, the Last Sacraments were administered after Father had suffered an attack of apoplexy. He was conscious and gave his blessing to the kneeling Sisters, but the next day he relapsed into unconsciousness. Father Chassé, detained by his duties in his parish and the ceremonies of First Holy Communion, did not arrive until after Father Corbe became unconscious. Sisters Olympiade, Ann Walter, and Roseann Koch spent the night at his bedside. Sister Mary Joseph and Sister Mary Xavier went to the rectory at four o'clock in the morning, and Father Chassé began the prayers for the dying. At a few minutes before five, "he died like a child without opening his eyes. He seemed to sleep, but he was no more."¹

Memories of a Faithful Life

Bishop de Saint-Palais came on the 4th, heartbroken at the loss of his faithful priest and friend, and the funeral was arranged for the following day.

The funeral service was as grand and imposing as loving hearts could make it. Requiem Mass was sung by Bishop de Saint-Palais, although at times he was almost overcome by emotion. At the end of the Mass, Reverend Bede O'Connor, O.S.B., delivered a touching oration on the life and virtues of our beloved Father. Beautiful as his panegyric was, everyone felt that it was far short of the full truth in regard to the saintliness of our revered Father. There were present twenty-three priests. The Passionist Society of Terre Haute volunteered to carry the precious remains to their last resting place. By his own desire, Father Corbe was buried at the head of the cross in our little cemetery.²

Many were the tributes paid to this faithful chaplain. Reverend Edward Sorin, C.S.C., in expressing his sympathy, wrote:

Thank you for your charitable appeal in behalf of your excellent superior. I have not waited for your pious request to recommend him to God; it was an old and precious remembrance. I said Mass for him the day after I received the announcement of his death, and I have recommended him to our Fathers here. I shall offer Mass again according to your request for all the community at Saint Mary's. Please render me this service when I shall be no more.³

Mother Anastasie, in a circular letter on the death of Father Corbe, gave the information about the funeral and sermon, and added:

In life he shrank from honor, but in death he received all that could be bestowed. He was all for us in life and so in death he wished to remain with us. . . . He had the consolation of receiving the Last Sacraments and all the spiritual assistance that the Church could give him at the hour of death, a favor which few enjoy who die of the disease Father suffered from. We have no doubt it was a special grace given him as a recompense for the untiring zeal and tender charity which urged him to bring this solace to the sick, even when he could scarcely walk from excess of pain, as well as a reward for his ardent love of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament.⁴

In referring to Father Corbe as "our more than father, who watched over the Community in its infancy," she was paying only a just tribute to one who had remained faithful to the Community in its hour of great trial. She also directed each mission to have five Masses said for the repose of his soul.

Bishop de Saint-Palais had never withdrawn from Father Corbe the title of Ecclesiastical Superior of the Community even though it remained only an honorary one. No longer had it been necessary to defend the Community against encroachment on its rights. Bishop de Saint-Palais assumed more and more the role of Superior, but his deference and regard shown to Father Corbe prevented him from making any change during the chaplain's lifetime. The title of Ecclesiastical Superior lapsed after Father Corbe's death, and no successor was ever invested with the broad authority formerly enjoyed by the chaplain.

Natural Gifts Spent in God's Service

Gifted with a brilliant mind and a deep spiritual outlook, Father Corbe also possessed a scholar's disposition. In his youth he had set aside any inclination to advancement and preferment, and a few years after his ordination he offered his services for ten years to work with Bishop Bruté, "the poorest Bishop in the United States." In 1836, he came with the group of priests that Bishop Bruté brought over, and began work in the vast diocese of Vincennes. He was pastor at St. Francisville, Illinois, at the time that Mother Theodore first met him in 1841. Tradition has it that Mother told him he would be very welcome at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. "What will you give me if I come?" he asked playfully. "Cornbread and bacon," was Mother's answer, and eventually in 1842, Father Corbe did come to Saint Mary's to be a bulwark of strength to a defenseless Community.⁵

Having sacrificed in 1846 his desire to return to France at the end of his ten-year period, Father Corbe found some recompense in the quiet and scholarly life he could now enjoy. He was interested in science and philosophy and subscribed to a number of periodicals dealing with those subjects. Every week he sent his copies to the teachers of these subjects with passages carefully marked, some for the perusal of the students, and some for the judicious handling of the teachers. In his best years he attended all recitals and programs, and listened carefully to the pretentious essays by the graduates, a feature of every Commencement. He also taught the classes in Religion, often calling the graduates "my little seminarians," and jestingly asking them when they would be ready to be candidates for Orders. His influence was a very potent one, and remained so until the coming of Bishop Chatard in 1878, who reinvigorated the classes in philosophy and religion.⁶

As chaplain he was very devoted. Ready at any time to come to visit the sick or dying, he came with "deliberate speed," removing his spectacles carefully, and marking the passages he was reading; but always reaching the bedside in time to bring comfort to troubled souls, or administer the Last Sacraments. The ceremonial call the Sisters paid to him at his residence on returning from mission, or on leaving Saint Mary's, was not a coldly ritualistic affair. It was an affectionate call on a Father, asking his blessing in thanksgiving for the past year, or on the one newly opening.

During the painful crisis at the end of Mother Mary Cecilia's

administration, Father Corbe urged peace and concord, and succeeded in effecting a better spirit among the malcontent group. He was a man of peace at all times, but his large and powerful frame ill-accorded with the gentle and serene soul that dwelt within.

The Most Reverend August Martin, Bishop of Natchitoches, Louisiana, a friend of thirty-four years' standing, was not at home when the message of Father Corbe's death came. He wrote later, thanking for the information and lamenting the loss of his friend. "He was a truly simple and upright soul," the Bishop wrote, "a friend of God and of men. He possessed the gift of fidelity and a faith which resigned him to endure and suffer all. You have lost more than a friend, and I pray for his repose and your consolation."⁷

The Reverend Hippolyte Dupontavice, in affectionately sympathizing with the Sisters, said that he felt that the heavy burden of the office of Vicar-General which Father Corbe discharged for twenty years, had shortened his life by ten years. Father Dupontavice also called attention to his own poor health, saying that one by one the old pioneer priests in the diocese were succumbing.

Rosine Parmentier wrote on receipt of the news:

I do not need to tell you that we sympathize with you in your sorrow; you know it well, dear Sister and friend, for spiritual bonds are strong and often become stronger than those of nature. From the height of heaven I hope that this dear Father will intercede for his beloved daughters, and that he will obtain from the Heart of Jesus to whom he was zealously devoted, a successor who will inherit his virtues and the many good qualities which made him so dear to you . . . I suppose that Father Corbe has been with your Community for thirty years since he came shortly after Mother Theodore did. They are the ones who planted that beautiful vine which, from its beginnings in Saint Mary-of-the-Woods has spread its branches through so many towns in Indiana.⁸

The Franciscan Fathers at St. Joseph's, Terre Haute

The matter of replacing Father Corbe was very happily settled in the appointment of Reverend John B. Chassé as chaplain. Father Chassé had been pastor at St. Joseph Church, Terre Haute, from 1866 to 1872. In the latter year, the Franciscan Fathers were established in Terre Haute with the privilege of the use of the St. Joseph church. Before

long, the Bishop approached them on the subject of opening a school for boys, preferably of a high school or college rank. Unfortunately for the Sisters of Providence, the location which seemed best to the Fathers for this purpose was the adjoining building in which the Sisters conducted the erstwhile St. Vincent's Academy.⁹

The grade school and high school of St. Vincent's were both overcrowded and some expansion seemed desirable. A bargain in real estate was broached to the Sisters — the Griswold property — on Fifth Street, five blocks south of St. Joseph's Church, and extending the entire length of the long block between Crawford and Deming Streets. The wooded grounds had been carefully landscaped, and the mansion itself was one of the most imposing houses in the city. The owners, Mr. and Mrs. W. D. Griswold, did not put up the place for public sale, but knowing the difficulty the Sisters were meeting in finding a place for their school offered it first to them. In fact, the Griswolds much preferred that the Sisters of Providence would have it even if the price had to be lowered. Both Griswolds were very Catholic in their views, Mrs. Griswold being a sister of the Right Reverend John Lancaster Spalding.

The matter was not an easy thing to decide, but Mother Anastasie, after prayer and consultation, decided to sell the old St. Vincent's to the Franciscans and to buy the Griswold property. The school was named in honor of St. Joseph. Both transactions were completed in April, 1872, the Sisters paying \$25,000 for the Griswold property. In view of her other financial commitments, Mother Anastasie placed her trust in Providence since the whole transfer had been done for irreproachable motives.

The Franciscan Fathers made extensive alterations and additions to the original academy and renamed it "St. Bonaventure's College." The venture seemed well received and the newspapers constantly paid tribute to the progress of the school.

The exhibition at St. Bonaventure's Lyceum held at Dowling Hall last evening was very fine. The programme was carried out in good style, satisfactory to the instructors and very pleasing to the friends and parents of the students. The parents must have been delighted with the proficiency resulting from the careful schooling which their children had received. The entertainment consisted of dramas, farces, instrumental music and chorus, each and all alike sharing in the honors and applause of the evening. At

the close came the distribution of prizes and the valedictory by Master Edward Barry.¹⁰

As for the new St. Joseph School, things were not so favorable. The mansion itself made a satisfactory convent and high school, but the structures on the property which had been used formerly as stables, hay loft, carriagehouse, and sleeping quarters for the coachmen, had to be remodeled. New doors and windows had to be cut in, new partitions set up, and connecting stairways built. Plastering and painting followed the remodeling, and school furnishings had to be bought. Here was to be the New St. Joseph Grade School. The original Griswold family residence was to be the regular St. Joseph High School with music and art departments. The Franciscan Fathers on their part paid \$10,000 to the Sisters for the old St. Vincent Academy building, but had to spend a substantial amount of money to adapt the building to its new use.

Mother Anastasie was greatly disappointed in the attitude of some of the families in the parish. Some parents openly declared that they would not send their children to school in "Griswolds' stables," and their influence drew others away. Nevertheless, with a diminished enrollment and a heavy debt, the school struggled on.

The Catholics of Terre Haute were not numerous enough to support a school exclusively for boys, particularly one of high school or college grade. Very soon, indeed, the Franciscans realized this, as their Superiors could not supply the necessary faculty to meet the needs of pupils of varying grades. In 1873, the Reverend L. Moezigemba, O.F.M.C., the second Pastor of the parish, asked Mother Anastasie to provide Sisters to teach the boys of grade school age as well as the girls. Though the practice of the Community was to teach girls, and boys only in the primary grades up to third grade, Mother Anastasie consented to take the boys up to age thirteen.¹¹

An added inconvenience to both the Sisters and the Fathers was the distance from the church to the Griswold home. The Blessed Sacrament was reserved in the Sisters' chapel, but the Sisters had to go to St. Joseph Church every day for the six o'clock Mass, return to the convent for breakfast, and then go back again for the children's Mass at eight o'clock and return to school. Rainy and winter weather made the long double trip a hardship.

For four years more the Franciscan Fathers carried on the work of St. Bonaventure's in spite of reduced faculty and steadily diminishing enrollment. Once again the venerable Bishop's desire to provide for the

education of the Terre Haute Catholic boys was frustrated — earlier through the hopes that the Jesuit Fathers could eventually open a school¹², and now failure again was evident. In 1876, the Franciscan Fathers closed their school and made overtures to the Sisters of Providence to resell the property to them. Mother Mary Ephrem, then Superior General, could not accede to their wishes unless she could find a purchaser for the Griswold property. This problem was not easily solved because the houses and the extensive grounds demanded a purchaser with sufficient money to offer a just price.

On September 27, 1876, the best arrangement available was completed by the sale of the Griswold property to Mr. W. E. Shryer for \$15,000 and a deed to his home. The whole transaction was a grave loss to the Community. The improvements made in the Griswold property were extensive, and the loss was estimated at \$11,250 as a minimum. As far as the change was concerned, the original location was far better than the Griswold property, but the Community could ill afford the financial loss¹³.

Under the care of Sister Natalie Rago, Superior, Sisters Meinrad Reimann, Mary Borgia Larkin, Mary de Pazzi Schurger, Mary Genevieve Wilson, Mary Remigia O'Brien, and Colette Hann, the old life was resumed in 1876 with peace restored to the indignant parents, and the new St. Joseph's Academy, as it was generally called, flourished until in 1939 it gave way before other modern changes.

The Little Sisters of the Poor

Just before the death of Father Corbe, Mother Mary of the Conception, Assistant General of the Little Sisters of the Poor, accompanied by Mother Mary of St. Teresa, came to St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Sister Mary Joseph welcomed them most heartily. She and Mother Mary of the Conception had been friends in their childhood and youth at Saint-Servan and had made their First Holy Communion in the same parish church, and it was at her invitation that Mother Mary of the Conception came for a visit.

The work of the Little Sisters in this country was just beginning to spread. Foundations had been made in the East and also in Louisville, Kentucky, and Cincinnati, Ohio. Two years before, Sister Basilide had taken old "Miss Ann" to Louisville to make her home with the Little Sisters there. "Miss Ann" was a homeless old woman who came to

ask for shelter in Mother Mary Cecilia's time. She was indeed a destitute person, very old, very deaf, and gave the appearance of being a hunchback. She was befriended in a spirit of charity and given a separate room in the famous old loghouse. As the Diary stated, "It was in our Lord's name that we took her in."¹⁴

Mother Anastasie had made an appointment for Mother Mary of the Conception to meet Bishop de Saint-Palais later in Indianapolis and her visit to St. Mary's was intended to be in advance of that date. To her great surprise, Mother Mary of the Conception found that she had accidentally come to St. Mary's at the very time that the Bishop was there to confirm. The arrangement was a most harmonious one. Sister Mary Joseph's introduction and presentation, and the retailing of many of the incidents that had attended other foundations relieved the poor Bishop of the necessity of having to endow an institution which he desired very much to have in his diocese. With the aid of St. Joseph, the Little Sisters always seemed able to find benefactors and to assume the duties of charity to the ever present aged and poor. The Bishop gave his consent for the foundation and on Mother Anastasie's return from Indianapolis she found all things happily arranged. On hearing the history of their founder, Abbé Le Pailleur, the Bishop was more pleased than ever. The young ecclesiastic had offered himself to Bishop Bruté, by whom he was much esteemed, to come and work in the Vincennes diocese. His Superior, however, withdrew the consent he had previously given and forbade him to go to the distant mission. It consequently seemed only right and just that the daughters of this good founder should come to represent him in the diocese and to carry out his earlier ambition. The Little Sisters had been accompanied to this country by their chaplain, Abbé Le Lièvre, who came the following week to visit St. Mary's.

The Bishop sent word to Mother Anastasie that he had purchased a donkey and cart for the Little Sisters, and also a young donkey called "Miss Casanova" for the novices. Father Bessonies was to have the equipage in readiness and Jerry Doyle was to come to drive it to St. Mary's where the donkey and cart would be kept until the Little Sisters needed them. Poor Jerry had a hard time making his way through the streets of Terre Haute. A crowd of children followed the cart and Jerry was hoarse by the time he had answered all the questions, especially about little "Miss Cassanova" — a rare sight in the Terre Haute streets. The Sisters of Providence set aside a cow and a calf and a few

chickens to send to the Little Sisters as soon as arrangements were made in Indianapolis to receive them.

Sister Ann Cecilia, Superior at St. John's, reported that the reception given to the Little Sisters by the Indianapolis people was all that could be desired and that they charmed the hearts of all they met by their simplicity and charity.

It was not until after Mother Mary of the Conception returned to France that the Little Sisters of the Poor were able to secure even a temporary location in Indianapolis. Mother Mary of St. Teresa came from the Cincinnati house to install the six Little Sisters who were to make the Foundation. Father Bessonies, Vicar General and pastor of St. John's had rented two small houses not far from the church and was most anxious to help in every way. He announced the arrival of the Little Sisters and emphasized their work to his congregation and encouraged them to be most generous in helping the Sisters find their home for the aged poor. The people generously responded to his appeal and many persons brought food and clothing as if they were most anxious to see the work commence. The Sisters at St. John's were most kind and attentive. They cooked and sent the first meal to the new home. The Little Sisters were much touched to see the pupils coming each in turn to bring a bundle of linen or clothing or a donation for the work.

The Little Sisters of the Poor were truly poor and the two houses where they were to commence could lodge but twelve inmates besides the small community. However, these homes were only temporary and the Little Sisters, as was their custom, were happy to share these discomforts in a spirit of poverty. On February 8, 1873, the first applicant was received into the Home, and on the 12th of February, Mass was celebrated in a small room made into a chapel, and the Blessed Sacrament was reserved. So many applicants presented themselves that the Sisters realized they had to have more room. They prayed to St. Joseph, their special protector, to come to their aid and help them find ground on which to build a larger home.¹⁵

Letters written by Mother Anastasie and the Particular Council had been sent to the local superiors making up the General Council of the Sisters of Providence asking their opinion about selling property to relieve the debt; and the Little Sisters of the Poor at Cincinnati were approached with a proposition that perhaps the Indianapolis Sisters might want to purchase the Fletcher property which Mother Anastasie

had bought for the purpose of building a hospital. The first option was extended to the Little Sisters. Instead of writing, Mother Mary of St. Peter and the Superior of the Indianapolis mission came to St. Mary's on March 21, 1873, to give their answer in person. They wished most heartily to purchase the property. To the Sisters of Providence this was a great relief. They thanked St. Joseph and his agents for this opportunity of ridding themselves of an ever-increasing debt. As the chronicler says:

We could dance for joy even if it is Lent, were it not for the sadness of our dear Reverend Mother who parts with the lot with the greatest reluctance. Notwithstanding it has cost her so much trouble and anxiety of mind from the time its purchase was first agitated, she feels it is a great sacrifice for the Community as the location is the best in the city for a hospital, the purpose for which it was bought. She mourns over the need of a hospital at Indianapolis. Mother yields, though regretfully, to the sale of the property as it was much desired by all the Sister Councillors to whom the matter was referred. One alone, the Superior of the Indianapolis house, Sister Ann Cecilia, feels about it as Mother does—that it is a sacrifice which can never be repaired. Mother's greatest consolation in this affair is the opportunity it affords her of showing respect to the wishes of the Council. Our reason for rejoicing is that by this transaction the Community is relieved of a debt of about \$50,000, counting the interest on the notes.¹⁶

The next day was spent in preparing and drawing up the conditions for the sale which were made as favorable as possible to the Little Sisters, and at the same time, indemnifying the Community for the cash paid in the improvements made on the property. It was transferred to the Little Sisters for the exact sum which it had cost up till that time—\$34,500. The Little Sisters returned to Indianapolis on the evening train. The deeds were drawn up by Lawyer Hickox and were sent by registered mail to Sister Ann Cecilia to have Mother Mary of St. Peter sign them and conclude the transaction.

With all the activity of helping the Sisters of the Poor what of the hospital ventures? Indianapolis had hopes, but no money was forthcoming. Terre Haute had money, but some bigotry and a feeble Catholic spirit. The times demand that for a while we discuss all the varying interests and openings that present themselves, and take up the history of the Providence Hospital in its due place a little later. If

Indianapolis did not support a new hospital, it did support a church which was eventually to foster a strong and active parish. The history of the parish pays due credit to all its prelates and pastors, and may well supplement any scattered histories.¹⁷

NOTES — CHAPTER X

1. Community Diary, June 3, 1872.
2. *Ibid.*, June 5, 1872. Changes in the cemetery in the course of time have slightly altered this arrangement. Father Corbe's grave is in a circular plot east of the Celtic cross now marking the spot where Mother Theodore's remains were placed in 1864.
3. Rev. Edward Sorin to Mother Anastasie, June 12, 1872. S.M.W.A.
4. Letter Circular, June 10, 1872.
5. Brown, History I, 292 ff.
6. Frances Howe, "Father John Baptist Corbe," in *The Signal*, September, 1891. S.M.W.A.
7. The Most Rev. A. Martin à les Soeurs de la Providence, 18 juin, 1872. S.M.W.A.
8. Rosine Parmentier à Soeur Marie Joseph, 19 juin, 1872. S.M.W.A.
9. So named because the subscription drive for its building began on St. Vincent's Day, July 19, 1849.
10. *Terre Haute Express*, June 27, 1873.
11. S. Agnes Clare Cassidy, S.P., *History of St. Joseph Academy, Terre Haute*. Typescript, p. 21-23. S.M.W.A.
12. *Infra.*, Chapter II, p. 17.
13. Important Events, 1840-1880, p. 225.
14. Community Diary, April 13, 1863.
15. Translation from the French Annals of the Little Sisters of the Poor, 1872-93. Indianapolis. Material received from Mother Gertrude of the Little Sisters, June, 1945.
16. Important Events, March 21-22, 1873, p. 186.
17. Mother Rose Angela Horan, S.P., *The Story of Old St. John's Indianapolis*: Litho Press, 1971), p. 130.

CHAPTER XI

The Building of the New Saint John's Academy Mother Mary Dies at Ruille

New Missions: Valparaiso, Richmond, Connersville, Seymour

St. John's, the new church in Indianapolis, often called at that time the Cathedral, was rapidly nearing completion. Some years before 1872, Bishop de Saint-Palais had bought property in the central part of the city and had intended to move the episcopal see from Vincennes to the capital of the state. The *Indianapolis Journal* noted the progress of the building which was then the largest Catholic church in the state:

Father Bessonies has just placed in St. John's Cathedral [sic] two elegant stained glass windows — one on the right, the other on the left of the altar. The one on the left is blazoned with the sheaf of wheat and cluster of grapes, emblematic of the bread and wine of the sacrament, and is surmounted with the figure of the pelican feeding its young, typical of the "Last Supper," in which the Savior gives His disciples a cup, saying, "This is my blood." The window on the right bears the cross, the anchor, and the heart — typifying the . . . virtues of faith, hope, and charity.¹

The next day the newspaper referred to the school which was thriving with the support of a thoroughly Catholic parish. The services rendered by the Sisters of St. John's during the Civil War in aiding and relieving the Sister nurses at the Hospital have been noted elsewhere.² The generosity of the families of the parish in providing clothing and supplies for the invalid soldiers demonstrated the prevailing spirit of service among the clergy and parishioners.

The pupils of Saint John's Academy for girls gave an exhibition in one of the schoolrooms of the Academy last evening which was much enjoyed by those present. After the friends and parents of the scholars had sufficiently examined the handiwork of the young lady scholars, the Sister Superior, Sister Ann Cecilia, led the way to the exhibition room, where the exercises of the evening were rendered. This Academy . . . built in 1858, has now about two hundred and fifty pupils. A new large and commodious school building is now being constructed on Maryland

Street, not far from the Cathedral. When the new building is completed, the present edifice will be taken by Bishop de Saint-Palais of Vincennes as his residence, as that distinguished ecclesiastic intends making Indianapolis his home.³

On February 25, 1872, Mother Anastasie and Bishop de Saint-Palais effected the legal transfer of the deeds of the properties mentioned above.⁴ The firm of D. A. Bohlen and Son was chosen as architect, and under its direction a very notable building was begun. We can only say of those who planned the structure that there were builders in those days. A three-story building with additional basement and large attic could not but excite the admiration of those who saw it. It was built of dark red brick with white stone trim to windows and doors, and a hexagonal wing on the right side, with a cupola surmounted by a cross. The high ceilings in the mode of that day gave an air of elegance to the interior. The music studios and practice rooms were located in the hexagonal wing which, with a little internal adaptation, could be converted into an exhibition hall.

The building, beautiful as it was, was erected at great hardship to the Community. The panic of 1873 caught the building at the exact spot where there could be no interruption of work. Contracts had been given out and signed, and the progress demanded the fulfilling of all contracts or a consequent irreparable loss. No contractor would yield, even to a temporary delay, and therefore Mother Anastasie had no choice but to carry on her obligations. In order to tide over the emergency, Mr. Bohlen advanced the money from his own funds until such a time as the Community could repay him.⁵

However great the anxiety and worry St. John's caused the Sisters of Providence, it was only in the material sense that this was true. In every other way, intellectually, spiritually, and morally, St. John's justified the confidence placed in it. "Good old Saint John's" was the source of many sound vocations to the sisterhoods, many excellent students for higher education, and many excellent wives, mothers, and career women in the city of Indianapolis. Saint John's "girls" had easy access to responsible positions by way of the road built by the achievements of their predecessors. There was no notation of the cornerstone laying probably because the function was omitted on account of the financial stress of the panic of 1873, and also because of the imposing solemnity which attended the laying of the cornerstone of St. John's church in July, 1867. During its long history, St. John's Academy was the

central point of contact for any Sisters in the city and the overnight stopping place for the current Superior General on her visitation tours. It was located near the Union Station, and was always a convenient place for Sisters of other communities to stop for a short time. So hospitable was Father Bessonies, and so sure was he of the cooperation of the Sisters at St. John's, that he was continually on the alert for strange Sisters. During the war and before the new building was erected, Father Bessonies invited Sisters en route to distant missions or hospitals, but delayed at the station, to come to St. John's for accommodations. On one occasion when he could not prevail on a party of thirty Sisters of Charity to venture through the crowded streets to the school he hurried to St. John's and said, "Quick, quick!" take supper to thirty Sisters of Charity who are waiting at the depot!" In a short time, baskets of food were prepared and two of the Sisters accompanied by several resident students carried them and served the thirty Sisters who were waiting in the old Union Station.

So accustomed had the railroad officials become to the generous charity of St. John's that they directed all wayfaring Sisters to the convent. On one occasion in the seventies, a colony of Sisters, exiled from Germany by the Falk Laws, were on their way West. Since they had a long delay in Indianapolis, the station agent directed them to St. John's. Two of them proceeded to the Academy to secure a hot drink for an ailing Sister. On being asked why they did not all come to the Academy, they replied, "We are too many." "How many?" came the question. "Fifty," was the answer. "Go," said Sister Superior, "and bring all your Sisters here for supper." The visitors were entertained, not with luxury, but with sufficiency, and for many years notes of appreciation for this service came to the Sister hostesses⁶.

New Schools in Northern Indiana

Mother Mary Cecilia had written from Chesterton that there were openings for schools in Porter County, the northeastern part of the state, mentioning Valparaiso in particular. Mother Anastasie had to defer opening that school because of her commitment to open Richmond. On August 29, 1872, Mother Anastasie accompanied by Sister Clementine Zimmerman, Sister Mary Stephen Walsh, Sister Mary Sophronia Bracken, Sister Celestine Bloomer, and Sister Mary Fidelia Semmersheim, arrived in Valparaiso a day earlier than they

were expected. All was in readiness for them, but they were spared the embarrassment of a formal reception. Many joyful people greeted them informally as they stepped from the train.

The Sisters were to be given a deed to one-half of the school property. As time went on and when the school increased, the remaining one-half of the lot would be deeded to the Sisters on condition that they would improve and add to the building as needs required. Separate arrangements were also made as to the sale to the Sisters of the residence then occupied by them. This agreement was secured by a warranty drawn up by the Reverend Michael O'Reilly, the pastor (1863-87).

The school was never large, but it was thought advisable in 1907 to give up the mission of Valparaiso on account of the scarcity of Sisters. From St. Paul's parish came a number of vocations, at least four of which were for the Sisters of Providence: Sister Mary Constance Walsh and her sister, Sister Gertruda, the artist; Sister Mary Theodata Stokes, of the beautiful voice; and Sister St. Josephine Dalton.

St. Mary's, Richmond, Indiana

St. Mary's, Richmond, Indiana, first opened in 1870, became firmly established August 20, 1873. No preparations had been made in advance for the Sisters, as the ladies of the parish felt that the Sisters would rather select the furniture since it was to be bought at the Community's expense. Reverend D.J. McMullen was in charge of the parish and his energetic efforts soon united the people who had suffered with a succession of pastors who were poor administrators and all much over-worked. In 1970 the parish celebrated its centenary, with the Sisters of Providence still in charge at St. Mary's.

The town of Richmond somewhat resembled Madison in its quiet atmosphere. There were two Catholic churches there and many Protestant congregations, but a considerable portion of the people were Quakers. Earlham College, established in 1847, was already a thriving Quaker College. As usual in the Midwestern towns, the Catholics made up the working class. Provision had been made in St. Mary's school for poor children to go to school at the expense of the parish if the family could not afford to pay tuition.

The Sisters loved the gentle Quaker speech, the "theeing and thouing," as it was often called, and always smiled appreciatively on

hearing in the stores, "What wilt thou have?" or "What can I do for thee?" The children attended school punctiliously through the autumn and winter months until May. Sister Celestine said that her room averaged sixty-three pupils, but in May and June the number went down to thirty, as the children were kept home to help with the gardens.⁷

Francis A. MacNutt, Papal Chamberlain, has left us charming accounts of his relations with the Sisters at St. Mary's. When he was a child, he found himself drawn to the "never dying" light in the sanctuary, although, being a member of a Scotch Presbyterian family, he had no knowledge of what was embodied in the Catholic faith. Sometimes he went to St. Andrew's as well as St. Mary's, to watch the sanctuary lamp. His own account speaks for itself:

One day, coming out of St. Mary's, I spoke to a nun. She had a pleasant face and at once smilingly answered me. We walked across the street together to where the school and the nuns' house stood, and when we reached the door, I asked her if I might see the schoolhouse. She took me in and showed me the different rooms, in which the only thing that interested me was the crucifix hanging on the wall of each room. Another nun appeared. The first was called Sister Mary Carmel [O'Farrell] and the second, Sister Mary Ildefonse [Hanily.] I liked these names and I thought Sister Mary Ildefonse beautiful, which she was, with bright blue eyes, nice teeth, and the sweetest dimples imaginable. What I liked best about the nuns was that they answered all my questions and never asked me any. . . . From the school we went into the house where several more nuns appeared, and we all sat in a circle in the parlour talking about something worthwhile. When I left, I had a rosary, the prayers of which I had been taught.

The narrative continues, detailing a visit to the church in which the boy had seen Father Dennis J. McMullen decorating the altar. He followed the priest to the rectory and was invited in. In this visit the priest learned that the boy was not a Catholic. In his next visit the boy gave his name, to Father McMullen's consternation.

Father McMullen told me it was wrong for me to make acquaintances and visit people without my grandfather's permission. He added that perhaps the latter might not like my coming to see him. I at once said that I knew he would not like it at all, therefore I had not told him, but that I knew plenty of people my

grandfather did not know and visited them without telling him. The next time I went to see Father McMullen, he would not admit me; he met me at the door and kindly, but firmly, told me I must come no more and that if I did, he would be obliged in conscience to tell my grandfather.

The boy was not daunted, however, and kept the strong inclination toward the Church in his heart.

Fortunately, I had the nuns and they never refused to admit me. They had taught me the Angelus, and how to say the Rosary. At the Catholic bookshop in Richmond I bought a small crucifix and a pair of china candlesticks and the wax candles to fit them. With these, I arranged a small altar on a disused writing-desk in the lumber-room upstairs, where odds and ends were stored and where hardly anybody ever entered. I used to get up in the night and say the Rosary before this crucifix, flanked by the lighted candles; after which I concealed them in the writing-desk.

In the meantime, Father McMullen had told Judge Scott, the boy's grandfather, about the visits to the rectory, and the stern man strictly forbade Francis ever to go again to the Catholic church. Not knowing of the visits to the convent, Judge Scott did not forbid them.

I . . . still had the nuns, who were ignorant of my domestic situation, to go to; at any rate, they never mentioned it, and neither did I. . . . My grandfather never asked me again, but I suspect he did ask the priest, and upon learning that the latter had seen nothing of me, was satisfied with that answer.⁸

Years were to go by, and not until Francis MacNutt reached his majority was it possible for him to enter the Church and begin his career as a layman in the Papal Court.

St. Gabriel's, Connersville, Indiana

Very soon after the Sisters were settled at Richmond, Mother Anastasie and Sister Mary James Stadelmann went to Indianapolis where they met Sister St. Joseph Regel, Sister Martina Lehner, and Sister Marcella Novotny who had been named for Connersville. On August 26, 1873, they were welcomed by the pastor, Reverend Henry Peters, but found no preparations had been made to receive them. At first they were lodged in the rectory, but in a few days they were given a good substantial house with absolutely no furniture of any kind, not even a

stand or table on which to place the articles necessary to bless the house. A hasty substitute was arranged: two trunks were placed one on top of the other, sheets spread on top, and on them candlesticks and a tumbler of holy water. The water was sprinkled by means of a spray of heavy grass gathered from the yard.

The mission was founded in extreme poverty. All the furniture was sent from Indianapolis and all paid for by the Sisters after some weeks. Many of the people seemed to have no idea of the privations the Sisters had to undergo. They slept on straw on the floor. The people were somewhat aloof at first, but as time passed a sincere friendliness developed. Father Peters died in 1874, but he had begun a good work. One of the early pupils, Mrs. Hassett, wrote:

It seems only yesterday that I had the joy of greeting the Sisters in our two-story brick schoolhouse. . . . At that time and for years after, the Sisters lived in the old school building which was very inconvenient and cold as a barn. When the new house was built, our beloved Sisters were in danger of not occupying it for long. . . . Father Rudolf, who succeeded Father Peters, informed the congregation that he was going to make a change in Sisters and have the Oldenburg Sisters come. My mother called on the pastor and told him of the sacrifices that were being made to have a parochial school, that we were satisfied with our Sisters, and that we would appeal to the Bishop. We lived in peace with our beloved Sisters as a consequence.

School opened in September, 1873, and I was enrolled there. My brother, William Joseph, two years older, and my sister Ella, two and a half years younger, were there also. We had three rooms, one upstairs for German boys and girls, taught by Sister Barbara Ewers, another room of older boys and girls of Irish parentage taught by Sister St. Joseph Regel, and the smaller children taught by Sister Mary Marcella Novotny. This arrangement did not last very long as the girls and boys were soon taught in separate rooms.

The Sisters did not have much furniture. Our school had a large hall in the center and a stairway. My mother found the Sisters sitting on the steps of the stairway, eating lunch off a rough box. She came home, got four chairs as quickly as possible (cane bottom, the best we had) and she carried one, I carried one, and Willie carried two. Later my parents brought butter, meat, lard,

milk, eggs, and all the things people need to eat, and usually a goose for Christmas and some chickens.⁹

There were many there who were heart and soul with the parish and the school: Abraham Conwell, an Indian trader, gave the parish the land for the old church, north of town, and later, better ground where the school was built. Mr. Sullivan, the father of the writer of the letter, was a stone mason, and he with Mr. John Ready, father of Sister Mary Edmond Ready (1874-1927), and John McGraw, built the foundation for the school, using good old-fashioned stone. These men worked after hours and on free time, receiving little pay for their work, but happy to help build a parish. There were many Catholic families there: the Hoeffers, the Sniders, the Schaeffers, the Garritys, the Loftuses, the Fords, the O'Tooles, the Maleys, the Carrolls,¹⁰ the Sullivans, the Nevins,¹¹ the Heinemanns,¹² the McCarthys, the Brennans,¹³ the Parkers, the Meyerses,¹⁴ the Sheehans, the Reilleys, and many connected by marriage, such as the Sullivans with the Heffernans of Washington, Indiana, and the Heffernans with the Heinemanns.¹⁵ The interrelations of all these devoted people would make an interesting study, but suffice it to say that in heart and soul they were devoted to their parish and their religion and no sacrifice was too hard for them to make.

At the time when modern plumbing became generally installed in Connersville, the men of the parish asked Father Rudolf to provide it for the Sisters' house. Father Rudolf was not interested. He had the idea that the Sisters, having taken a vow of poverty should experience its full benefit. The same opposition met the suggestion that a furnace should be put in to heat the convent and school. Several men of the parish, among them Mr. John F. Carlos and Mr. Edward Ansted, raised the money for these two ventures by subscription.

The Sisters, caught between the displeasure of the pastor and the indignant zeal of the parishioners, prayed most earnestly for a peaceful solution to the predicament in which they were innocently involved. The men carried their plans through, but in the annual report of the state of the parish, they were credited with having paid their pew rent, but no mention was made of their charity towards the Sisters and the school.¹⁶

From Connersville also came Josephine Luking, later Sister Marie Gratia (1906-1964), the first superior of the mission to China, established by the Sisters of Providence in 1920. Mother Marie Gratia, as she was affectionately called, was the last survivor of the original band of six Sisters, and was at her death the oldest American Sister of any

community in point of service in the China-Taiwan field.¹⁷ The Carlos family was also represented in the Community by Sister Regina Clare (1907-1955) who served as local superior in some Indiana and California schools.

St. Gabriel's parish, named for the second patron of the saintly Simon Gabriel Brute, retained the Sisters of Providence until the close of 1926, when Reverend Theodore Mesker made a change of Sisters without informing the congregation. However, he was soon to find out that the teaching Sisters, no matter of what sisterhood, no longer were permitted to overwork themselves scrubbing the church, substituting for the parish organist at all Masses, and doing janitor work of all kinds. Worry, anxiety, and the loss of support from the parishioners brought on the good priest's death in 1927.

The cordial relationship existing between the Connersville people and the Sisters of Providence still remains active. "I went to school to the Sisters of Providence in Connersville" establishes an immediate introduction to the older members of the Community.

St. Ambrose School, Seymour, Indiana

Whenever Mother Anastasie passed through Jackson County on her way to New Albany, Jeffersonville, or Madison, she had noted the very good location presented by Seymour, Indiana, as a place for a new mission. In May, 1873, she visited the town with a view to seeing what could be established there. A widower, owning a small lot to the southwest of St. Ambrose Church and on the opposite side of the street, offered to give the property to the Sisters if they would give him a home, and educate his fourteen-year-old daughter, whose desire seemed to be inclined towards religious life. A legal engagement was entered into embodying these stipulations. On August 29, 1873, Mother Anastasie, accompanied by Sister Mary Stanislaus Hayes and Sister Rosina Baumert went there. They were joined by Sister Mary Columba Condon, who was withdrawn from the staff of Providence Hospital. The loss of the latter was deemed a great sacrifice, but as a peace offering a new sewing machine was purchased for the hospital.

By the time the Sisters reached Seymour, the plans had gone somewhat awry. It was strongly suggested that Mother Anastasie build a convent for the Sisters; but the plot of ground was trapezoidal in shape and too small to be built upon, and yet provide space for privacy and a

yard. Father Victor Schnell, who was located at Edinburg, Indiana, and yet had charge of Seymour as an out mission, tried to exchange the lot for two others north of the church. This arrangement was not satisfactory to the old gentleman who was donating the plot first mentioned, and all the negotiations fell through. A very small house was rented with the hope that something more suitable could be arranged later.

During the first years, the people who were devoted to the Sisters, felt a great sense of injustice in the fact that they did not have their own pastor. They did not want to contribute to the support of the church when it was in use only on Sunday. Furthermore, the insidious influence of the American Protective Association was at work here, and the fact that there were free public schools available gave the parishioners a fallacious argument against the support of a parish school. The discussion waged until the appointment of Reverend Anthony Schenk as a regular pastor. Then the situation changed and the people were attentive and kind to the pastor who was entirely at their service, and they began to take a sincere and steady interest in the school. It gave promise of being a large place as it had a railroad junction there, but this expectation was not realized. At one time it seemed that a high school could be opened there, but the people in the early years were mostly laborers, and they needed the help of their children as soon as they completed the eighth grade. The school remained in the care of the Sisters until 1917. Sister St. Anthony Tierney (1887-1921) was one of the girls who entered the Community from Seymour.

Death of Mother Mary in Ruillé

On April 21, 1870, Mother Mary celebrated her golden jubilee, a day of deep rejoicing to her Sisters in France. Preparations for the festivity of the day were conducted secretly since it was known that Mother Mary had no liking for complimentary speeches. The day was too notable a one to pass unheeded. Bishop Fillion successfully petitioned the Holy Father for a special blessing and plenary indulgence for her and for all the Sisters throughout the Institute. In every mission, Mass was offered for her, and the Sisters received Holy Communion, thanking God for the graces Mother Mary had been given for herself and for them.

The speaker for the day, M. l'Abbé Monsabre, pastor of the Madeleine at Vendôme, sparing Mother Mary's feelings as much as

possible from embarrassment, commented on her long life in the service of God, and the many difficulties attendant upon it. He assured her that the bishops who had governed the see of St. Julien (Le Mans) during her lifetime, had entertained the deepest sentiments of esteem, confidence, and affection towards her.

La Semaine du Fidèle, in closing the account of the day, said:

Even the poor were not forgotten. On the eve of the feast, bread and meat were distributed in abundance to them, but this new act of charity was not needed to have them add luster by their presence and their prayers to the feast of their Good Mother.¹⁸

During the election of 1861, Mother Mary had asked the Sisters not to re-elect her, but the petition was not granted. Again in 1871, she besought Msgr. Fillion to have regard for her increasing disabilities and advanced age, and not ask for a dispensation for her to continue in office. This time her request was granted, and Mother Anastasie Quentin was elected to replace her.

The two years of freedom from office were employed by Mother Mary in preparing by prayer and generosity for her death which she felt would not be long delayed. As her infirmities increased so also did her humility and obedience. The forthright uncompromising character no longer needed to make itself felt, and she applied herself to almost constant prayer to atone for her faults and to purify her soul. A long time had elapsed since 1822 when she, as a simple lay Sister, known as Sister Cécile, was elevated to the Superior Generalship of the new Community. Deep faith and a sense of justice, untempered by mildness, had always been characteristic of her, and now in her last years it was said of her by her Superior, "One could not find throughout the Community a Sister humbler, more respectful, more obedient, more faithful in asking permissions than the former Superior General."¹⁹

Letters had come to Mother Anastasie at St. Mary-of-the-Woods asking for prayers, and the Sisters awaited the inevitable conclusion. On October 29, 1873, so the expected letter read,²⁰ Mother Mary had died, consoled by the reception of the Sacraments and leaving a sorrowing but edified Community. The news was received on November 17, and the next day a High Mass of Requiem was offered for the repose of her soul. Mother Mary had always been held in reverence by the Sisters in America, and in awe also, because of the long duration of her government. Her advice was often sought in the early years, and even as late as the end of Mother Mary Cecilia's

administration. She was personally known to but few of the Sisters, but well known through the tradition and the love for her that Mother Theodore had left as a legacy to the Community. The early differences of opinion had never severed the bond of love which existed between the two animated by the love of God.

Sister St. Vincent Ferrer, Sister Basilide, Sister Mary Xavier, and Sister Mary Theodore Le Touzé were the only Ruillé Sisters left although Mother Mary Cecilia, as companion to Mother Theodore in 1843, had met Mother Mary at Ruillé. Sister Mary Joseph Le Fer, too, knew Mother Mary, but had never been a Sister at Ruillé. Sister Olympiade, too, knew Mother, but her relationship was not so tender. The other postulants who came in 1852 at the same time Sister Mary Joseph did, had doubtless met the venerable Mother.

Of all the Sisters, Sister Basilide was the most expressive and uninhibited in her sorrow. To Mother Anastasie in Ruillé, she wrote:

We are united in the confirmation of our loss. We share very deeply with you, very dear Mother and Sisters, this sorrow, as we have suffered the sadness of these past months. We shared with you the pain of the long and cruel agony which our venerated Mother endured and which you were powerless to relieve. Her beautiful way of bearing it was but a continuation of the lively faith and love characteristic of her.

We have offered a novena of Masses and Holy Communions as a feeble tribute of the love and veneration that we Sisters in America have had for her. Mother and Sister Mary Joseph are writing you, and Sister St. Vincent, who is quite infirm, has asked me to convey her sympathy.

Bishop de Saint-Palais will announce Mother Mary's death at the Masses on Sunday and will ask the prayers of the congregation for her. His Lordship himself will offer a High Mass for the repose of her soul.

Thus closed in honor her long life which had borne many sorrows in founding her Community. Mother Mary had protected it during the revolution of 1848 and during the Franco-Prussian War, and she was given a few years of quiet at the end. Her remains are now interred in the mortuary chapel of the cemetery together with those of Père Dujarié and Mother Marie-Madeleine du Roscoät. The three founders who began in poverty on the Heights of Ruillé, did not dream of the expansion of their apostolic labors to America, and thence to China,

Taiwan, and South America through the efforts of the American Sisters; to England, Belgium, Holland, Ireland, Ceylon,²¹ and Malagassy. Their mission well done, "they are in peace, and their works follow them."

NOTES — CHAPTER XI

1. *Indianapolis Journal*, December 24, 1872.
2. See Chapter IV, p. 000.
3. *Indianapolis Journal*, December 25, 1872. Bishop de Saint-Palais did not move to Indianapolis, but his successor, Right Reverend F.S. Chatard, took up his residence there on August 28, 1878.
4. Community Diary, February 25, 1872.
5. *Ibid.*, October 4, 1873.
6. Notes taken from the *Souvenir of the Golden Jubilee of St. John's Academy*, June 21, 1910.
7. Sister Celestine, *Reminiscences*, p. 6.
8. Francis A. MacNutt, *A Papal Chamberlain*, pp. 22-25. Material quoted with permission of Longmans, Green and Company, N.Y.
9. Mary Sullivan Hassett, *Reminiscences of Connersville*. In a letter to Sister Agnes Clare Cassidy, July 21, 1940.
10. Sister Rose Clare Carroll, S.P. (1902-1959).
11. Sister Bertha Nevins, S.P. (1877-1921).
12. Sister Mary Alexandrina Heinemann, S.P. (1880-1903).
13. Sister Clement and the late Sister Mary Leonore Brennan, S.P. (1927) and (1925-1976).
14. Sister Mary Josepha Meyer, S.P. (1889-1949).
15. Eileen Heffernan Heinemann, Class 1932, St. Mary-of-the-Woods College.
16. Information given by Sister Regina Clare Carlos.
17. Mother Marie Gratia died in Taichung, Taiwan, October 29, 1964.
18. Alric, *Histoire*, p. 264.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 273.
20. Letter of Mère Anastasie Quentin, November 2, 1873. S.M.W.A.
21. Ceylon is now known as Sri Lanka.

CHAPTER XII

The Life and Death of Providence Hospital

Although the year had been saddened by the death of Father Corbe, 1872 was to be a momentous year, marking the opening of Providence Hospital, now some two years in building. Mother Anastasie profited much by the careful guidance of Mr. Rose whose sole ambition was to do good to his cherished town. The philanthropist was growing old and was in feeble health, but his advice was sound and his encouragement never failing. His total contribution to the project was the five-acre plot of land, and about \$30,000 in money at various times. Up to the time of the dedication, June 30, 1872, very little money had been given by the people of Terre Haute, not more than \$4,290. Money raised by fairs and private donations from friends came to \$4,586. The total available was about \$40,000.

Mr. Rose hoped to provide funds sufficient for the building, and urged rigid simplicity in the construction, but in spite of the combined efforts of those in charge to keep the costs down, there remained a large debt to be assumed by the Sisters. It was to be expected that this first venture should be an imposing one, and consequently, the plans were carefully made to render the hospital modern and functional.

The firms put in charge of the work were made up of highly respected men. Mr. J. A. Vrydaugh was the architect, and Mr. T. B. Snapp, the head contractor. The stone work was prepared by Messrs. Wagner and MacFarlane, the brick work was M. L. Wood and Company, the iron work by McElfrish and Company of the Phoenix Foundry, the plumbing by R. Buckell, and the roofing by Moore and Hagerty. The entire cost of the structure, without the furniture, was estimated at \$80,000.

Located in the northeastern part of the city, near the junction of the railroad tracks, the hospital was not too far out of town; but was situated on Thirteenth Street at Fifth Avenue, and was readily accessible.

The late Dr. Charles N. Combs says of it, "It was a red brick building, three stories high with a basement, and was designed to accommodate seventy-five patients. The plumbing and kitchen facilities were much in advance of the time, and the hospital was a credit to the city."¹

General Features of the Hospital

The building, including the basement, was three stories in height, terminating with an airy and spacious attic. The hospital had the form of a reversed T, eighty-five feet north and south through the center, and a frontage of one hundred fifty-two feet at the widest part, and fifty-two feet at the narrowest. While the central part only of the projected building was finished, it was complete in all its parts. Verandas or porches were added so that the convalescent patients might have the advantage of light and air. It was planned to build pavilions adjoining the main building but connected to it by cloisters, each pavilion two stories high with basement, and providing eight to twelve additional rooms, complete with plumbing and attendants' rooms. However, the pavilions would have to wait until more money was available. The idea was an attractive one as the pavilions would afford a pleasing variety to the building which otherwise might have been too austere.

The site, two hundred seventy-five by six hundred feet, had been used to the greatest possible advantage. The earth removed by the excavation for the building was spread on the highest part of the knoll, and gently sloped toward the west, to afford an easy carriage drive. On the east, a terrace was raised to protect an enclosure which could be used for vegetable gardens, and fruit trees yet to be planted. The area in front of the hospital was to be adorned with shade trees and flowers to make the institution grounds agreeably homelike.

The north wing was provided with underground cellars for provisions and coal bunkers, and above these in the basement, the bakery, boiler room, kitchen and scullery. The kitchen was carefully planned with windows and doors on the east and west sides, and a ventilator and funnel over the range so that the heat and odors incident to "the culinary process" might be carried out of the room. Above the kitchen on the first floor was the steward's room, and an attendant's room. Above the boiler room and bakery were the washroom, laundry, and hot air dryer, and the room had a waterproof floor. Two elevators had been installed to take fuel and soiled linen to the laundry, and one connecting with the kitchen to send up food, plates, clean linens, etc., to the patients, and communicate directly to the surveillant's and nurses' rooms.

Two refectories on the right and left connected with the kitchen. Further to the east were located storerooms, and to the west, the

basement reception room and office. Further details were supplied by Mr. Vrydaugh:

The first story is entered by two doorways from the south and one from the east with flights of iron steps and railing leading to balconies five feet wide supported on iron brackets and running thirty-nine feet in length between the central wings and the central projection made by the oratory.

The second and third story front rooms are to be provided with similar balconies, all affording to the weak convalescent the warmth of gentle solar heat in the fall and spring, while by superposition of the balconies, the effect of veranda shade will be obtained during three-fourths of the time on summer days. The two first-story front entry-halls are not repeated in any other story, but the halls in the wings, with halls running east and west through the building, are the main arteries through which communication is had by means of three stairways in the several stories. Next to the front entrance first story are located the reception rooms for ladies and gentlemen. Between these rooms is a large parlor; occupying the central part of the front to the west side of the front are the consultation room, doctor's office, and pharmacy. To the east end of the front are the convalescent room, surveillant's room, and bathrooms. In the north wing in this story are the rooms for the service already described.

The central part of the front, second and third story is occupied by the oratory which is to be neatly frescoed and finished — a gallery being arranged in the third story from which participation in prayers may be had . . . A Chapel Mortuary will be erected adjoining the main building.

Each wing will be provided with elevators to their several stories for the sick and all unable to walk upstairs.

The capacity of the central building of the hospital will accommodate fifty patients in minimum, while as many as seventy-five patients may be cared for in any emergency; and rooms for surveillants, nurses, cooks, and servants are not included therein.

Every room in the house is provided with a fireplace, the grate acting either as a radiator of heat, or as ventilator. The building is further arranged to be heated by steam at low pressure . . . The boiler will be so constructed as to admit of fifty pound pressure to

work elevators, raise hot water to kitchen, laundry, washroom, bathrooms, etc.

The style of the building, although plain, is not without attraction. A hard limestone-dressed base course protects the brick walls at the front line . . . In front in the centre of the second wall, a large triple window with stained glass lights up the Oratory. A group of statuary, representing the Good Samaritan, will form an ornament indicating the purpose of Providence Hospital.

The walls are built with bricks manufactured by Messrs. Miles & Hedden, which for solidity and beauty are second to none. . . . The slate roof is hipped to the wings, while the central part will present gables to the north and south. The roof line is relieved by three ornated ejectors, boldly accented chimney stacks, and a central cupola, terminated by a gilded copper ball and cross elevated to an hundred feet above the ground line in front of the building.²

Public Response to Dedication Day

The day of the dedication, June 30, 1872, was indeed a gala one. Two wagon loads of Sisters went over from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods to take part in the reception of guests, and a wagon load of provisions was also dispatched to meet entertainment needs.³ The function was heralded as the most impressive Catholic celebration ever yet held in the city. Excursions were run from Indianapolis, Vincennes, and nearby places to afford opportunity for those who wished to attend. The delegation from Indianapolis came over the Indianapolis and St. Louis road on two trains, twenty coaches and two baggage cars. The procession formed on Ohio Street near Fifth under the Chief Marshal, John K. Durkan, assisted by Mr. James Renihan, of Indianapolis. The Indianapolis societies participating were:

The Emmet Guards

United Irish Benevolent Society — 70 men

Indianapolis Total Abstinence Society — 75 men

St. Joseph German Catholic Society — 60 men

German Sodality — 40 men

The Terre Haute societies were represented by:

Prairie City Guards

Hibernian Benevolent Society — 120 men

German Catholic Benevolent Society — 40 men
Friendly Sons of St. Patrick — 40 men
Young Men's Amulet — 46 men
St. Joseph Sodality — 70 men

Upon its arrival at the hospital grounds, the procession marched into the enclosure. At the northeast corner of the building a stand had been erected for the speakers. The Right Reverend Maurice de Saint-Palais, Rev. Simon Siegrist, and Rev. A. Bessonies of Indianapolis, were among the clergy present.

Dr. Ezra Read of Terre Haute, in a few brief remarks, after eulogizing the liberality of the founders of the hospital and the kindness and self-sacrificing devotion of the Sisters, introduced the speaker of the day, Dr. Theophilus Parvin of Indianapolis, a professor in the Louisville Medical College.

Dr. Parvin, a Presbyterian, in an eloquent address paid tribute to the constant effort of the Catholic Church to alleviate suffering, and cited instances from the time of the early Church of the constant struggle to combat the paganism that ignored the immortal soul of man. The address continued:

Today on the banks of the Wabash as fifteen centuries ago on the banks of the Tiber, a hospital is consecrated. There have been grand things done in this Prairie City, but this is the grandest of all. It is fit and proper that this act of consecration should be done at the glad harvest season. As to the propriety of this demonstration upon the Sabbath: I know not the considerations that influence others, but I see good reasons for this action. Hundreds of workmen are so tied to their labor that they cannot spare any other day for this purpose. The Master did not hesitate to heal and visit the sick on the Sabbath day. His example is good; we may safely follow it . . .

What is the lesson of this hour to us? How much better men and women shall we be because of our assembling for this high and noble purpose? The lesson taught should be: 1, Gratitude to the Giver of all; 2, Resolution to relieve suffering and succor the sick.

These gates shall be opened to the public regardless of their faith and condition. Let these very walls give praise to the workers who have completed this temple of humanity.⁴



ST. REVEREND MAURICE DE SAINT-PALAIS

URTH BIS. SEN.ES.

During the address, Bishop de Saint-Palais went through the building blessing it, after which the procession returned to the city.

Dr. Parvin, in stressing the Sunday celebration, delivered a rebuke to "Inquirer" who had attacked the idea vigorously in the press. The critic pointed out that the selection of Sunday for the day was a disregard of the principle of the Protestant church which respected the Sunday. Furthermore the procession was held at the hour of the day when most Protestant churches hold their services. "Is this a studied insult, or a carelessness hardly less culpable, that at least four of the most prominent Protestant churches were passed by this procession during the hour of services? The writer then reaches an astonishing conclusion that the hospital is being built largely, if not chiefly, with Protestant money,⁵ a conclusion in which Mr. Rose would not have concurred.

The anti-Catholic sentiment was still present in Terre Haute minds. The Sisters had stressed that the hospital was non-sectarian, meaning that its services would be offered to people of all faiths without discrimination. The newspaper notes again that the dedication ceremonies were non-sectarian, except that the building was blessed according to the rites of the Catholic Church.⁶

Resentment and Opposition Develop

A manifestation of opposition had shown itself a week or so earlier. An epidemic of smallpox was reported in town and Mother Anastasie offered the services of the Sisters to the city pesthouse, the building set aside for contagious diseases, which was rapidly being prepared. Mayor Cookerly accepted the offer gratefully, but when the Sisters came to take over, he had to withdraw his acceptance. He had been warned by an anonymous letter that if the Sisters crossed the threshold of the pesthouse, the building would be burned down. He advanced the idea that using Sisters who were giving their services free would upset the wage scale of the attendants employed in hospital work, but the Sisters were inclined to think that a more serious feeling prompted the letter.⁷

The Obedience List of August, 1872, named the nurses at the Providence Hospital. Sister Gertrude Sherlock was put in charge, assisted by Sister Lawrence Boland, Sister Alice McBarron, Sister Ann Mary Hayes, Sister Julietta Maroney, and Sister Mary Edward

Michael. Sister Athansius Fogarty, who had been very successful as administrator of the Military Hospital in Indianapolis, had sustained a severe injury to her hand when a window came down on it. It was intended that later on she would be placed at Providence Hospital when her hand healed, but this intention was never carried out.

The choice of the medical staff had yet to be settled. There were doctors in Terre Haute, perhaps sixty-three in all, representing different branches of the profession, some of whom were retired. The city directory of 1872 listed seven dentists and thirty-two doctors of medicine practicing in Terre Haute, among them Doctors Hall, Link, Patrick, Read, Stone, Whittaker, Willien, Worrell, and Young. The Directory also announced the opening, within a few weeks, of Providence Hospital, located in the northeastern part of the city, built at a cost of \$200,000.⁸ Some of these names appeared on the Providence Hospital roster in charge of patients. As yet no chief of staff had been named.

A letter from Vincennes brought the information that Dr. J.I. Baty, who was then in California, was thinking of returning to Vincennes, and that he would be interested in being on the staff of Providence Hospital. Mother Anastasie was delighted at the thought of having someone whom the Community knew so well at the Hospital and wrote at once, asking him to be in charge. Dr. Baty was pleased as was also Bishop de Saint-Palais. Dr. Baty asked only a lodging for Mrs. Baty and himself at the hospital, and offered to pay his own board. Mother Anastasie would not, of course, allow him to do so, but insisted on providing both board and lodging. On November 18, 1872, Dr. Baty returned from the West and was installed at the hospital.

On the same day Bishop de Saint-Palais appointed Father James Stremler chaplain of the hospital, and conferred on him full faculties for the carrying out of his spiritual duties.⁹

In September the formal opening had taken place. The editor of the *Express* reported favorably on his visit there at the end of the month. "There are thirteen patients at Providence Hospital; several have been discharged. Everything looks neat and inviting even to a well man. A small house separate from the main building is kept for patients having contagious diseases. Only one death has been reported — that of an old man who was taken there in the last stages of dysentery."¹⁰

October and November, 1873, showed fewer patients, sometimes seven, sometimes nine. The Hospital authorities then offered to take

charge of the poor from the asylum at \$4 a week. The facilities at the Poor Asylum were not only inadequate, but deplorable, yet this offer did not interest city officials, but rather alarmed them. Sick people with means were taken care of in their own homes. Some people objected that the Hospital was too far out, yet the greatest growth in the city was in the northeastern part of the city toward the Hospital.

After Providence Hospital publicized the lower rate for the poor, the city authorities began work in feverish haste at the Poor Asylum to get it ready to care for one hundred patients. A report was circulated that the county had paid between two and three thousand dollars to Providence Hospital during the year for the care of the sick. The impartial editor of the *Express* made a search through all the County Commissioners' expense sheets of the year and found only the total of \$659.20 paid to the Hospital, and an outstanding bill of \$10.35. He proclaimed openly that the charge was false. However, with the impartiality of the press, he printed the notice drawn up by the County Commissioners prohibiting any further use of Providence Hospital.¹¹ The complete statement is as follows:

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' REPORT AND RESOLUTIONS

Whereas,

The Commissioners are often called upon to pay large sums of money for taking care of sick persons in indigent circumstances; and

Whereas,

It is considered by the Board that under the existing circumstances, such allowances are but so much additional expense; therefore,

Be it Ordered,

That from this date no officer of this county, excepting the members of this Board, shall have the authority to send any person or persons to Providence Hospital to be taken care of at the expense of the county. But this Board will, when in session, or either of its members may, when the Board is not in session, if proper reason can be given why any person or persons should be sent to any other place than the Poor Asylum, order that such person or persons be sent to Prov-

dence Hospital to be cared for at the expense of the county,
and

It is Further Ordered,

That all persons who are at present at the said Providence Hospital at the expense of the county, shall be removed to the Poor Asylum immediately unless it is the opinion of the County Physician that such removal cannot be made without danger to the said persons, in which case they shall be removed as soon as practicable.

Dr. Worrell was the County Physician and his name appears after all the entries from the county. After the announcement last quoted, his name appears once on December 24, 1873, when he was attending a private patient, John Ward. By December, 1873, the Poor Asylum was equipped to take care of one hundred patients, and the expense of caring for each was announced as \$1.25 a week. Dr. Baty attended a number of paying patients at their homes and some in the hospital, and Dr. Leon J. Willien is listed on the hospital roster as caring for the greatest number. The total number of patients was seventy-three during the years the hospital was open, and only thirty-nine of those were supported by private funds. An attempt was made to interest people in Benevolent Associations, Providence Hospital itself sponsoring one with reduced charges. St. Joseph's Young Men's Benevolent Society was another, but all attempts to build up the clientele were futile.

The printers of Terre Haute paid the expenses of an itinerant printer who became ill in the town. Several workmen at the hospital were cared for without charge. Father McBarron and the Franciscan Fathers paid some expenses for the poor of their parishes. Adam Forepaugh settled the account of John Barbour, one of the circus men, who was cared for by Dr. Watts.¹²

Miscellaneous items were charged at low prices against patients, such as prayerbook, forty cents; catechism, five cents; wine, fifty cents; beer, ten cents. In the case of the two women who died and who were from the County Asylum, the Sisters provided shrouds. Four of the patients died, all of them reconciled to God and in peace. One young girl, Nancy Etheridge, niece of John Paddock, died after sixteen weeks of illness. The hospital expense was \$132.57 plus \$7 burial charge.

A few patients came from Vincennes to be under Dr. Baty's care, among them, a Mary A. Long, and Count Camille de Buisserets.¹³

Unwise Appointment Foretells the End

In June, 1873, improvements to the newly-erected hospital were inaugurated by Madame Baty who had misunderstood her place in relation to the administration of the hospital. Mother Anastasie was now faced with an expense of ten thousand dollars which she had not authorized.

The feeling among the citizens, and even among the medical men of the city, at the introduction of a "foreigner" as chief of staff, was pronounced. Dr. Baty was a very highly qualified man. He had come to Vincennes from France about 1836. He graduated from Montpellier University in Paris, taking the fourth honor which entitled him to a position in the Medical School of Paris. He preferred, however, to practice his profession in free America rather than enjoy the high honor of a great medical school in France. He took up his residence at Vincennes and worked with Bishop de la Hailanière and his second French successor, Bishop de Saint-Palais.¹⁴ At the time of the opening of Providence Hospital in 1872, Dr. Baty had been practicing medicine for at least twenty-five years and had been in France at the time of the Franco-Prussian war. He had served in Paris during the siege by the Germans, and during the excesses of the Commune. But the tide of Americanism was running high, and consequently, aware of the feeling against him in Terre Haute, Dr. Baty resigned his post.¹⁵ He returned to Vincennes, where he took up his residence with his family in an apartment owned by Mrs. Frank Bayard. He expected to make Vincennes his future home,¹⁶ but attracted by his experiences in Europe, he returned there and in 1875 was again in Paris. Later, he and his wife and two nieces spent two months at Saint-Servan where they visited with friends and met Bishop de la Hailanière¹⁷ who was spending some time with his brother. The good physician, who had been so kind and attentive to Mother Theodore in the 1840's and 1850's in her serious illnesses, was revered and honored by Mother Anastasie and the Sisters, and they regretted his departure from America.

After Dr. Baty's departure, the headship of the hospital staff fell automatically on the 34-year-old Dr. Leon J. Willien. This well-equipped Catholic physician had recently married a Fort Wayne young woman, Mary Fleming, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Fleming.

Dr. Willien was well prepared for his work. Born in Alsace-Lorraine in 1840, he was the son of an eminent physician, a professor in the

University of Strasbourg. His widowed mother, always referred to as Madame Willien, came to the United States and settled in Sainte Marie, Illinois, in the Picquet colony. The boy was educated at St. Louis Medical School, and later at the University of Strasbourg, graduating from the school of surgery there in 1864. He was the first doctor in Vigo County to have a paper published in a medical journal. He headed the staff of St. Anthony's Hospital, Terre Haute, when it was founded in 1881. He was the attendant physician of the Sisters of Providence for thirty-five years.¹⁸

Slowly but surely a conviction was forcing itself on the minds of Mother Anastasie and her Council. The hospital was not the success they had hoped for, nor was it ever likely to become so. Gone were the high hopes that had been raised earlier that the new hospital, even though built in an undeveloped area, would contribute to the city's development and the opening of a parish in the northeastern part of town. In fact, as early as 1869, the city suburbs were known as Montrose, Elmwood, Greenwood, and Providence.

The appointment of Dr. Baty, splendid physician though he was, was deeply resented by the people of Terre Haute and by the physicians of the town.¹⁹ There were at least twenty-one able doctors available and from that number a capable chief of staff could have been selected. The younger Catholic doctors had done what they could to encourage patronage of the hospital and its really unusual facilities, but all to no purpose. Townspeople able to pay were cared for in their own homes, as some were quite unwilling to risk the loneliness and fear which accompanied sojourns in hospitals. No preliminary canvass had been made to determine the reaction of people to the need of a hospital, and the abandonment of the "begging tours," or soliciting of financial support, cut the Sisters off from this information. Perhaps some people, too, shrugged off any feeling of obligation to a benevolent project and left the enterprise to Mr. Chauncey Rose or to the Sisters of Providence.

Bigotry was more active than the Sisters realized even though they had suffered from it in the past. False rumors were in circulation about the attitude of American Bishops towards the pronouncement of the dogma of Infallibility, representing them as opposed to the proclamation. These rumors were prompted by the French press and taken up by the American papers. The effect on the non-Catholic public was to arouse fears of papal encroachment and to revive an anti-Catholic

spirit. As far as Catholics were concerned, most of them followed the advice of the *Catholic World*, the leading Catholic periodical: "Our readers would do well to pay little or no attention to the thousand and one reports that will be circulated in the newspapers."²⁰

An ex-priest, Father Alessandro Gavazzi, who was touring the country, came to Terre Haute. He spoke at the Congregational Church there, representing himself as an Italian reformer. He claimed to have a following of thirty thousand regular hearers in his Free Christian Church of Italy, and attacked Pope Pius Ninth on the score of the dogma of Infallibility. He asked for money from the "Christian hearts of America to found a college in Rome to educate evangelists. A liberal collection was taken up."²¹

Colonel R. W. Thompson's new book dealing with Catholicism was announced in the papers. "We learn that the Hon. R. W. Thompson of Terre Haute is putting the finishing touches on a book upon which he has been engaged for a number of years, and one that will attract attention. . . . Harper and Brothers will be the publishers. Mr. Thompson has given several years of his life to the investigation of these matters and has collected a fund of facts which cannot fail to excite very great interest when they are laid before the public."²²

Colonel Thompson was a man of influence in the political field. A few years later he was to serve as Secretary of the Navy under President Rutherford B. Hayes. In the early years of St. Mary-of-the-Woods he had been a speaker on a patriotic program held at the Institute about 1843.

Colonel Thompson's first book, *The Papacy and Civil Power*, was a systematic attack on the Papacy, and was followed in 1877 by a second, *In the Footsteps of the Jesuits*. Reverend F. X. Weninger, S.J., one of the itinerant Jesuit missionaries, refuted these books in his *Address to the American People*. His answer consisted of two major divisions: one, discussing the relation of the Papacy to civil power, and the second, a summary of the contributions of the Jesuits to the history and civilization of the United States.²³ Father Weninger pointed out the numerous errors of fact, the inadequate knowledge of Colonel Thompson, and the many misquotations.

The prestige of the Secretary of the Navy may have attracted attention to these books, but Colonel Thompson's presence in Terre Haute did not augur well for the promotion of good will toward Catholic institutions.

As late as June, 1873, Mother Anastasie had considered building a small school on the hospital grounds. The project of building was abandoned, but the little cottage which had been used as a convenient structure during the erection of the hospital was kept open and two of the Sisters from the hospital, Sister Mary Thomas Gordon and Sister Mary Patrice Rice, taught religion and the three R's to the children of the surrounding area.

The action of the Commissioners of the County Asylum seemed to be the death blow to the hospital and on November 17, 1874, the hospital was officially closed. A few Sisters remained there, living in the west wing, to safeguard the property and to continue the small school, but the disposition of the property was still undecided.

NOTES — CHAPTER XII

1. Charles H. Combs, *History of Medicine in Vigo County, Indiana, 1818-1951*, p. 418. Typescript. Emeline Fairbanks Library, Terre Haute, Indiana.
2. *Wabash Express*, July 1, 1872.
3. *Community Diary*, June 30, 1872.
4. *Wabash Express*, July 1, 1872.
5. *Ibid.*, June 29, 1872.
6. *Ibid.*, July 1, 1872.
7. *Book of Important Events, 1840-1880*, p. 179.
8. *City Directory of Terre Haute, 1872* (Terre Haute, Indiana: Ingalls and Company), p. 24.
9. *Book of Important Events, 1840-1880*, p. 182.
10. *Wabash Express*, September 28, 1872.
11. *Ibid.*, December 9, 1873.
12. *Day Book of Providence Hospital, 1872-74*. S.M.W.A.
13. Grandfather of Sister Camille Ostendorf, S.P.
14. H. W. Kemper, *Medical History of the State of Indiana* (Chicago: American Medical Association Press, 1911), pp. 8-10.
15. *Wabash Express*, October 3, 1873.
16. *Vincennes Sun*, October 15, 1873.
17. Hailandière à Père Audran, 29 août, 1877. NDUA.
18. Combs, *History of Medicine*, p. 420.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 421.
20. *Catholic World*, January, 1870, p. 699. Also quoted in *St. Meinrad Essays*, December, 1961.
21. *Wabash Express*, July 27, 1872.
22. *Evansville Journal*, May 26, 1873.
23. Rev. F. X. Weninger, S.J., *Address to the American People* (New York, 37 Barclay Street: P. O'Shea, 1879).

CHAPTER XIII

Financial Complications. The Chapter of 1874.

Revival of Devotion to the Sacred Heart

Earlier in 1872 it had been discovered that the Sisters of Providence were holding land in excess of the value of thirty thousand dollars permitted by the 1846 charter. No one had thought of this limitation, for during the first seven years of its existence, 1840-47, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods had not owned as much as a square inch of land. Now, however, the situation was different, and through the good offices of Senator Edwards, speaker of the Indiana Legislature, Mr. Daniel Doherty, and other interested friends, an amendment¹ to the charter was passed, confirming the broad powers already given and increasing the power of ownership to three hundred thousand dollars. Many of the schools staffed by the Sisters of Providence were owned by the respective parishes, and only those which were connected with academies built by the Sisters came under the ownership of the Community. The extension was deemed adequate for the time.²

Father Corbe's death was still a keen remembrance, and yet another loss was to come to the Vincennes diocese in the death of Reverend Hippolyte Dupontavice of Madison. At the time of Father Corbe's death, he had said that he felt his own death was approaching, but it came unexpectedly on May 27, 1874. In response to a telegram, Father Chassé left at once for Madison to represent the Community as well as to express his own sorrow.

Father Dupontavice had come to Indiana in 1839 with Bishop de la Hailanière, and he cherished for that prelate, whose first ordinand he was, the feelings of a devoted son. This veneration did not impair his devotion to Mother Theodore and the Sisters. On hearing of Mother Theodore's death, he was so overcome with grief that he could not approach the Sisters to express his condolence without giving way to his own emotion. In him, the Sisters of Providence always had a devoted friend.³

On August 5, 1874, just before the Chapter opened, a new marble altar given by Mr. Daniel Doherty in memory of his recently deceased wife, was consecrated by Bishop de Saint-Palais, and the first Mass offered on it was for the repose of the soul of Mrs. Doherty.⁴

The Chapter of 1874

The General Chapter for elections in August, 1874, was summoned in due time, but a mood of uneasiness possessed its members. They were all experienced Sisters who were well aware of the precarious state of finances in the country and were informed on the causes of the Panic of the preceding year. They looked askance at the continued expansion of the Community at the expense of its credit, and having an appreciation of the pioneer "make do" spirit, they were averse to lavish furnishings or too comfortable surroundings. During the summer of 1873, a brief summary of the financial situation of the Community had been drawn up, but even lacking in detail as it was, the statement caused alarm. Both the Particular and General Councils were convinced that something must be done to curtail expenditures.

Problems arose with the drawing up of the delegates to the Chapter. Bishop de Saint-Palais felt that the Community had members old and wise enough to make up the Chapter without his granting dispensations for aunt and niece, sisters, or cousins, to be members, so that care had to be taken in voting for delegates to avoid such relationships. He also insisted that all choir Sisters professed for ten years would be eligible for election as additional members. The complete Chapter consisted of twenty members.

When the members assembled on August 7, one beloved face was missing, that of Sister St. Vincent Ferrer. The oldest of the original six, and an octogenarian, she had been suffering for some time from the infirmities of her advanced age. Conspicuous for her quiet, almost timid demeanor, she was always loved for her peaceful nature. She died at St. Mary-of-the-Woods on July 1, 1874.

The general opinion seemed to be that Mother Anastasie was not the person who could make the reductions and adaptations necessary; and that an entirely new Superior would be more successful. A more thorough statement of the liabilities of the Community made the painful situation evident. The supporters of Mother Mary Cecilia, knowing the Bishop's mind on the subject, did not entertain any idea of putting her back in office, but they must have felt that these debts would never have been incurred under her care. The projects undertaken required enormous sums of money, and when the debts were drawn up on one sheet, they represented an unbelievable total. A summary of the principal transactions will verify this.

1. Additions and changes to the Institute which were not included in the first plan, and which had to be discontinued, leaving the building in an unfinished state;
2. Providence Hospital which had engulfed \$125,000 over and above the gift of the site and \$30,000 from Mr. Chauncey Rose;
3. The erection of St. John's Academy, Indianapolis, which together with its furnishings cost more than \$125,000;
4. The purchase of the Griswold property in Terre Haute at a cost of \$25,000;
5. The purchase of the Madison Hotel and new furniture, costing \$18,000;
6. The Fletcher property in Indianapolis for \$26,000, and additional improvements, city assessments, bringing the total to more than \$33,000. This site had been sold to the Little Sisters of the Poor for its exact value, but time had to be given to the Little Sisters to complete their payments;
7. The purchase of the Hall property in Jeffersonville at a total cost of \$14,000, and many other minor projects.

Mortgages had been signed against the larger buildings, St. John's, Providence Hospital, and the Griswold property. The principal creditors were Bishop de Saint-Palais, Mr. Daniel Doherty, and Mr. Green of St. Louis, but there were many lesser ones.

The Woollen & Webb bank in Indianapolis in which Bishop de Saint-Palais deposited his money had failed, and the repeated reports of similar bank failures made His Lordship advise Mother Anastasie to stop work on St. John's. As mentioned before, this could not be done. The material had been purchased for the building and the contracts made no provision for interruption of work. Mr. Bohlen advised continuing the building as far as it had been contracted for, and there was no choice except to do this.

Mr. Doherty, being one of the principal creditors of the Community, became alarmed, and demanded a full financial statement of the affairs of the Community. This was refused and a very limited statement of the borrowings given him. In reality, Mr. Doherty did the Community a service by awakening Mother Anastasie to the precarious financial situation and threatening to take control by law. He tried to restrain her from taking on new building projects no matter how gilt-edged they seemed. He acquainted the Sisters with the danger they were in, and this knowledge was disseminated throughout the Community. His

denunciation of the financial policy of the Community was made later, on one occasion, to a young newly-elected Council member who was visiting at Jeffersonville, but who was not responsible for the difficulties. So vehement was he on the subject that Sister Mary Liguori Smith was reduced to inconsolable weeping, convinced that all was lost.⁵

The bare statements of indebtedness were not, of course, the full picture. The indebtedness had been far greater, but payments had been made, both on principal and interest of the money borrowed, and it was soon learned that the total outstanding indebtedness amounted to more than \$175,000, in present day values, more than \$1,000,000, a tremendous sum for Sisters who had no worthwhile assets.

Ten per cent was an ordinary rate of interest. All of the money owed had been borrowed at that rate, and some of it at compound interest. The Secretary of the Community had records of what Mother Anastasie or the Sisters had borrowed, but not of all the money borrowed in the name of the Community, because many friends borrowed for us in good faith. But before very long she did have the total. All creditors demanded their money; and whereas, one friend borrowed at one rate of interest, and another, under different conditions, none of the agents owed anything. No matter who borrowed how much from whom, the Sisters of Providence owed everybody. Each day brought in new demands. The creditors called, not singly, but several at the same time.

It might be asked why the Council permitted such colossal expenditures. Mother Anastasie, interpreting Articles 62 and 63 of the Rule, that the Superior-General could cast a second vote in case of a tie, felt that they meant she had two votes at all deliberations. The articles referred to read as follows:

Art. 62. If there be a diversity of opinion, the majority will decide the case; should there be an equal number of voices on each side, the opinion of the Superior will decide.

Art. 63. Whenever there will be a question of a definite decision, they will have recourse to the secret scrutiny [ballot] and the Superior will have two votes. Nevertheless, in cases of little importance, when the Sisters are all of the same opinion, they can dispense with this scrutiny.

These articles taken in sequence mean exactly the same thing, but taken out of sequence, Article 63 before Article 62, they seemed to Mother Anastasie to give her three votes. As the Council consisted of four members and the Superior-General (Sister Mary Ambrose having

resigned after the election of 1868, and not replaced in 1871), one of the Council members invariably was of the same opinion as Mother Anastasie. When Mother cast the two votes she thought she was entitled to, but to which, of course, she had no right, the vote generally came out tied. In this case, Mother Anastasie broke the tie by voting, and her plans always went through.⁶

Mother Anastasie saw everything from the bright side, and she felt that everything would work out favorably. The Chapter did not feel so, and its opinions were made known to Mother Anastasie by the Bishop in order to prepare her for a change of position. No dispensation for her to continue in office was asked for by the Council, as they felt that unless something intervened, the Community would be bankrupt. Mother Anastasie made her deposition of office after the early Mass, and in accordance with custom, did not appear for the election of her successor.

The Chapter then looked about for a Sister conspicuous for prudence in addition to other religious virtues, and they found their new Superior-General in the person of Sister Mary Ephrem Glenn, a thirty-eight-year-old Sister who had been a successful local superior at St. Rose Academy, Vincennes, and who had substituted for Sister Basilide as econome when the latter went to France in 1866. Mother Mary Cecilia had received a few votes, but on successive ballots they diminished in number. The elected members were as follows:⁷

Superior-General — Mother Mary Ephrem Glenn

First Assistant — Sister Mary Joseph Le Fer

Second Assistant — Sister Mary Liguori Smith

Mistress of Novices — Sister Mary Cleophas Foley

Econome — Sister Basilide Sénéschal

Secretary — Sister Mary Ambrose O'Donald

Mother Anastasie did not appear for any of the elections, and the Bishop was much irritated at that. A humble apology on the part of Mother Anastasie restored peace, and Mother returned to the final deliberations.

Mother Anastasie had the view that money was well invested in real estate. This was often quite true, but the possession of much land and unpaid-for buildings at a time when money was unobtainable proved to be no form of asset. If the financial situation had not been so acute, the Hospital might have held its own in time, but the rumors of panic,

falling of stocks, ruin of financiers, created a clamor and a demand unequalled in the memory of those living.

It was evident that Mother Anastasie felt the change as she was still hopeful for the future solution of the problems occurring in her administration, and had hoped to recoup the losses. However, her whole attitude was one of resignation and submission. Using the privilege of choice given to a retiring Superior-General, she chose to go to St. Ignatius Academy, Lafayette, where she replaced Sister Mary Ambrose who was superior there. Her gentleness, kindness, and humility had always drawn the hearts of the Sisters to her, and she found herself very much welcomed in her new post.

Renewal of a Cherished Devotion

Devotion to the Sacred Heart had always been loved at St. Mary-of-the-Woods. The Sisters of Providence had always fostered this devotion and it had been a part of their lives from the time the first Reunion prayer was formulated in 1822. Père Dujarié and Mother-Marie Madeleine du Roscoät composed this prayer, following the inspiration of the prayer of St. John Eudes.⁸ Every three hours during the day at the Reunion bell, all hearts joined in invoking and praising the Sacred Heart: "We unite with all our Sisters to adore Thee, O Sacred Heart of Jesus . . ." Again at a slight interruption of recreation in the evening, came the aspiration: "Sweet Heart of Jesus, be my Love; sweet Heart of Mary, be my Salvation."

The ground was well prepared for a fuller flowering of this devotion under Reverend John L. Gleizal, S.J., in 1854, when his exhortations inaugurated special devotion to the Sacred Heart. The Jesuit Fathers who followed him from time to time were zealous in the cause, especially after the feast was extended to the universal church.

During his lifetime, Father Corbe had subscribed to many French periodicals, among them the French edition of the *Messenger of the Sacred Heart*. His copies eventually found their way to the community room table, but since the 1860's, a change in the bilingual character of the Community had taken place. American and English publications were thought to be more usable in the American schools than those in European languages. Sister Mary Joseph often voiced her regret that literature on the devotion to the Sacred Heart was not available in English. It seemed like an answer to prayer, therefore, when Father Sestini's project of issuing the *Messenger* in English came to fruition.

The content was to be the same as that of the French edition, and the cost would be two dollars for one annual subscription, but one dollar and a half a year apiece to groups of twelve subscribers.

He must have sent out advance literature on the subject as thirty-six letters in Saint Mary-of-the-Woods archives indicate. The first is dated March 18, 1866, and contains a list of subscribers, thanks for a check, and these words: "I pray the sweet Heart of Jesus to be as liberal with you as you have been with Him." The large number of these early Indiana subscriptions may be deduced from the fact that twenty free copies were sent to Father Corbe in accordance with the practice of sending one complimentary copy with every ten subscriptions.

Sister Mary Joseph exerted herself not only to increase the devotion among the novices, but also called on the Sisters on the missions to secure subscriptions among the parents of the pupils. There was a need also for a German edition of the *Messenger*, and it was urgently asked for to meet the desires of many Catholic German people, of whom there were many in Indiana in 1866.

Poor postal service and delays in printing occasioned a great deal of correspondence about lost copies during the early years. "Be not afraid to write to me," urged Father Sestini, "whenever anything occurs out of the way, and we will try to remedy it." None of the Lafayette subscribers received their copies during one month, and at times, local subscribers too, reported missing numbers. Subscriptions throughout the country were few and prospects were discouraging, but Father Sestini's zeal was superior to every obstacle. On January 19, 1867, he announced the publication of the monthly leaflets of the Apostleship of Prayer, a devotion which had been established during the previous year at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. The Sisters at once availed themselves of this new means of spreading devotion through the circulation of the leaflets. Sister Mary Joseph wrote the mission Sisters concerning the League of the Sacred Heart and the Apostleship of Prayer:

Father Corbe has received from a Jesuit Father, the proposal to send to each of our missions a diploma or statute by which each local Superior would be empowered to aggregate any person wishing to belong to the Apostleship of Prayer of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. I have accepted for you with Mother's permission. As soon then as the diploma arrives, have a small box or register in readiness, and begin to take names. (The children must have made their First Holy Communion). The indulgences are the

same as those for the other Association of the Sacred Heart to which they will belong by right. The prayers are the same, but nothing is of obligation except offering our actions at the beginning of each day in union with the intentions of the Sacred Heart.

. . . It is rather a great league of prayers than a confraternity; it is designed to oppose the increasing impiety of people. . . .

Let us try, dear Sister, to make the Sacred Heart known and loved whilst we have time and means."

Just a little later Father Sestini acknowledged a check for twenty dollars from Sister Mary Joseph for subscriptions to the *Messenger*. Father Sestini thought that the well disposed among the numerous Protestant children of the schools of the Sisters of Providence might be permitted to join these circles.

I hope your house and the others of your Sisters have received the January no. of the *Messenger*. The February no. will come soon.

I enclose the first sheet of the Rosary of the Apostleship which we intend to publish monthly together with the *Messenger*: the circular which I send with it explains its object. In my opinion, it is the best means to organize well the association of the Apostleship and with much fruit, especially in communities, sodalities, academies, etc.

Now my time has become so limited that I need someone to help me. And thus I apply to you for some help in your section of the country. Be then pleased, (provided it does not inconvenience you), to inquire if and how many sheets of the Rosary may be desired by your different establishments and let me know something of it at your earliest opportunity.

The Sisters and their friends were now sending intentions and thanksgivings to be published in the *Messenger* and looked for them eagerly in each number, but not always successfully as Father Sestini had to combine them to save space. This fact, and a continuing irregularity in issue were made subjects of a number of letters in 1867. "I have done everything in my power," he wrote, "to obtain the safe arrival of the *Messenger*. Next month we will make an appeal to the Sacred Heart of Jesus recommending the affair as a particular intention."

Father Sestini made a trip to Cincinnati in the summer of 1866 to arrange about opening a western center in charge of Reverend Joseph

E. Keller, S.J., and Mr. P. Fox. On his way back to St. Louis, he stopped at Saint Mary's to express his appreciation of the efforts of the Sisters to spread the *Messenger*. The going was still rough, but he repeatedly commended the zeal of the Sisters "to find subscriptions for which accept my heartfelt gratitude." He came again in August, 1868.

Father Keller was now propagating the Scapular of the Sacred Heart. He sent a cut and the Sisters printed badges themselves with the inscription, "Cease, the Heart of Jesus is with me." Mother Mary Cecilia wore one, and the badges were sent out widely and worn with much devotion by the Sisters and their pupils and friends.

In December, 1868, Sister Mary Joseph sent a list of subscribers and a check for fifty dollars which was duly acknowledged by Father Keller. In 1869 an arrangement for joint subscriptions to the *Messenger* and the *Ave Maria* was made and Father Sestini sent some extra copies for free distribution. The novena to the Sacred Heart was now publicly observed by daily devotions at Saint Mary's and the Sisters and pupils enrolled in the Guard of Honor which was later aggregated to the Confraternity of the Guard of Honor of the Sacred Heart.¹⁰

Father Sestini emphasized the mission of the *Messenger* to induce what ascetics call affective devotion and to inspire its readers with a spirit of prayer. "Some may not be capable of this, but others whose taste has been vitiated by light reading," he hopes, "will have a little patience and perseverance."

Father Sestini said he had written to the Postmaster General, complaining about the non-delivery of the magazine. "I think the devil himself is in that postoffice at Indianapolis," he said. Later, Father Keller wrote: "Things are now going better. Do not lose courage. The Sacred Heart of Jesus will conquer. Please accept my thanks for the laudable effort you have made in favor of the *Messenger*. I have no doubt that the Sacred Heart of Jesus will reward you."

As early as 1869, the "Month of the Sacred Heart" was read during June in the chapel. The devotion of the Month of the Sacred Heart and of the First Friday were ardently and faithfully observed in all houses of the Sisters of Providence. Sister Mary Joseph was endeavoring to secure from Rome, evidently through Father Sestini, permission to have the Litany of the Sacred Heart sung publicly at First Friday Mass, a practice begun in 1878, and in use until the liturgical changes of Vatican Council II.

In convoking the Vatican Council, Pope Pius IX had requested the

archbishops and bishops of the world to submit topics for study, and also *postulata* or recommendations and suggestions which were considered important enough to be acted upon, and which were designed to increase the devotion of the faithful or to clarify poorly-understood points of doctrine. Among the important *postulata* submitted was the request that the whole world be dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.¹¹ The Mass and Office of the Sacred Heart had been drawn up by order of Clement XIII in 1785. Pope Pius IX had extended this Mass and Office of the Sacred Heart to the West in 1856, and this request was most agreeable to his desires. However, the interruption of the work of the Council after its providential definition of the doctrine of Infallibility, left many things undone.

The Holy Father appointed a commission of Cardinals and Bishops to investigate the mind of the faithful on the subject of the world-wide consecration. The Holy Father's desires and wishes were clear, and as a consequence, some of the bishops of the world began the consecration of their dioceses. By 1872 a number of bishops in Spain, Italy, and France solemnly consecrated their dioceses, and plans were made for the erection in Paris of a magnificent church in honor of the Sacred Heart.¹² The dioceses of Westminster and London were among the first in England to respond to the movement. In the United States, the diocese of Savannah, Georgia, was the first to effect this consecration,¹³ followed soon after by the diocese of St. Paul, the archdiocese of Baltimore, and the Vicariate of Kansas.¹⁴

In fact, so dear to the Holy Father was this petition that he recommended as the general intention of the Apostleship of Prayer for September, 1874, the consecration of Rome and the world to the Sacred Heart. In the discussion of the general intention, the Reverend Rector pointed out that while the consecration of the world to the Sacred Heart would have been a magnificent spectacle had it taken place during the Vatican Council, he did not believe that it would have proved equally effective in attaining the end which the Savior had intended when He revealed this beautiful devotion to the world. The Reverend Rector felt that Pius IX, a prisoner in the Vatican, persecuted and suffering with Christ, was more likely to awaken the sympathy of the Divine Heart than when he was a powerful sovereign and could display all the pomp attached to his position. He recommended, therefore, that all the churches and congregations which had previously petitioned the Holy Father to consecrate the world to the Sacred Heart

renew their petitions. The Sovereign Pontiff would be glad to know that his 1,200,000 children who expressed their wish to him four years before were still of the same mind and faithful to their resolution.

In 1873, Bishop de Saint-Palais spent the whole day of November 16 at St. Mary's, and at the end of the customary evening program in his honor, the pupils of the Institute presented a petition for the consecration of the diocese to the Sacred Heart as part of the celebration of the Bishop's approaching silver episcopal jubilee. The Bishop gave his consent, and had at first thought to have the consecration made on the jubilee day itself, January 14, 1874. He deferred to the wishes of Archbishop Purcell, the metropolitan of Cincinnati, who wished all the suffragan dioceses to make the consecration throughout the Ecclesiastical Province on the same day, January 1.¹⁵ The Bishop was delighted to approve the public consecration of the Sisters of Providence to the Sacred Heart on the same day.

The event was signalized by an indoor procession from the study hall of the Institute through the covered walk connecting the Institute with Providence, terminating at the chapel. Mother Anastasie walked first, carrying the banner, and four Sisters carried the streamers of ribbon attached to the banner. The procession was an imposing one: the pupils of the Institute, twenty-four novices and postulants, thirty-two professed Sisters, and the ten Sisters making up the choir. When the procession reached the chapel, the banner was deposited in the place of honor designated for it at the gospel side of the chapel just within the sanctuary railing.

Mother Anastasie, Sister Mary Cleophas, and Sister Olympiade attended the Bishop's Jubilee Mass in Vincennes on January 14, 1874. The ceremonies were impressive. Sixty-one members of the clergy were present, among them Bishop Dwenger of Fort Wayne and Abbot Marty, first Abbot of Saint Meinrad Seminary. Both these ecclesiastics addressed the Bishop in congratulatory addresses, but Bishop de Saint-Palais' response, often halted by emotion, far exceeded them in eloquence. Mother Anastasie brought as gifts to the Bishop a purple cassock, purple velvet cape, biretta, and other accessories.

After the Jubilee celebration at Vincennes, Bishop de Saint-Palais came with Father Benoit of Fort Wayne, the Franciscan Fathers of Terre Haute, and several visiting clergy, on January 20, 1874, to give his Jubilee blessing to Sisters and students. The students presented a program in honor of His Lordship, and he, in turn, thanked them for

this attention, calling it a new testimony of the respect, kindness, and affection always manifested towards him by the students of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. He also told them that he had many invitations to visit other places but there was none to which his heart was more inclined than it was to his children of Saint Mary's.

The next day, after the High Mass, the versette: "Domine, salvum fac pontificem nostrum Mauritium," was sung, and the Bishop was visibly moved by this. He hurriedly knelt down at his prie-dieu to hide his emotion, only to see that his coat of arms had been embroidered on the velvet cover.

Later that day, His Lordship sent a treat of oranges, cake, and candy to the students, and all of them were invited to see and taste the feastday cake, nicely frosted, and decorated with his coat of arms.

Following the plea contained in the General Director's above-mentioned exhortation, Sister Mary Joseph on December 5, 1874, addressed a petition to the Holy Father, joining in the universal request for the consecration of the whole world to the Sacred Heart. In response to the petitions and prayers of millions of the faithful transmitted to Pope Pius IX through the respective bishops, His Holiness proposed to the bishops of the world an act of consecration to be recited by each and all of the faithful throughout the Catholic world. And so it may be said that the whole Catholic world on the same day — the 16th of June, 1875, the second centenary of the revelation of the Sacred Heart and the thirtieth of the Holy Father's elevation to the Papacy — spontaneously consecrated itself to the Sacred Heart. To this act, a plenary indulgence was appended under the usual conditions.¹⁶

These striking events, and the hoped-for culmination of devotion to the Sacred Heart, were filled with consolation for those whose hearts were centered on the glory of God and the extension of His love and mercy to the world. In spite of the anxiety which, in 1873-74, the financial situation was causing the Community, there was a strong conviction that if God's interests were served, all would yet come out happily.

NOTES — CHAPTER XIII

1. March 5, 1873.
2. By a later amendment of 1909, all restrictions on value of property owned were removed.
3. Community Diary, May 28, 1874.

4. The altar was saved from the fire of 1889. When the interior of the church was completed in 1907, the altar was found to be too small and out of proportion to the sanctuary. It is now the main altar of the Sacred Heart Chapel, Foley Hall, used by the college students.
5. Important Events, 1840-1880, p. 217.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 207.
7. *Procès Verbal* of the Election of 1874.
8. Alric, *Histoire*, p. 65.
9. Circa 1867. Sister Mary Joseph to Sister Mary Francis. S.M.W.A.
10. July 25, 1884.
11. Saint Meinrad Essays, "Ecumenical Councils," **XII**, 33, 39.
12. *The Messenger of the Sacred Heart*, October, 1872. **VII**, 446.
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*, October, 1873, **VIII**, 447, 493.
15. Bishop's Circular, December 8, 1873.
16. *The Messenger*, November 1875, **X**, 493.

CHAPTER XIV

The Financial Concerns of Mother Mary Ephrem's Administration

Saint Ann Orphanage Takes Over the Empty Hospital
New Missions: Peru, Indiana; St. Patrick, Indianapolis

The results of the election returned only three of those previously in office to the Council: Sister Mary Joseph, Sister Basilide, and Sister Mary Cleophas. Mother Mary Ephrem, feeling herself both young and inexperienced for so important a post, saw all too clearly the situation she faced. Her Council members immediately assured her of their support in everything she thought fit to attempt in this crisis.

Mother Mary Ephrem, Margaret Glenn, entered into the course of this history only briefly when she replaced Sister Basilide as Econome while the latter was in France in 1866. Mother Mary Ephrem was born in Bellefont, Pennsylvania, January 21, 1836. Her father was of Irish, and her mother of German descent, both strong Catholics. Like many pioneers of that era, the family moved westward and settled at Madison, Indiana. When little Margaret was ten years old, she met the Foundress, Mother Theodore, who was visiting St. Michael's School in Madison. Mother Theodore gave her a holy picture showing a child kneeling near the Blessed Virgin. The Foundress said to her, "You will give your heart to our Lord, too, my child." "That," said Mother Mary Ephrem, "was the beginning of my vocation."

Mother Mary Ephrem's entrance into religion was delayed by family responsibilities, although a younger sister, Jane, who took the name of Sister Sophie, entered in 1857, and served in the emergency hospital in Vincennes during the Civil War. Mother Mary Ephrem herself was twenty-five years old when she entered in 1861, and she consequently brought a maturity of judgment which belied her few years in religion.

She had been superior at St. Rose, Vincennes, during the seven years preceding her election as Superior-General, and her love of prayer and her influence for good were well demonstrated in that post. Her quiet, peaceful, and prayerful disposition made her very acceptable as Mother General.

The Ceremonies of August, 1874. The Morris Sisters.

Father Arnold Damen, S.J., conducted the ceremonies on the Assumption and in his sermon alluded to Mother Theodore. His remarks brought tears to the eyes of a number of his hearers, many of whom knew the venerated Foundress personally. Her memory was a sacred inheritance transmitted even to those who had not known her.

The ritual beauty of vesture and profession was both impressive and consoling to the members of the General Chapter who knew only too well the financial troubles of the Community. The courageous responses of the participants required by the ceremonial brought renewed hope that all was not lost and that a reinvigoration would certainly take place. Bishop de Saint-Palais met the novices and postulants in Providence Parlor before the ceremony. He remarked that he did not think an event similar to this ceremony had ever taken place in any religious house in the country. Among the participants in the ceremony were four sisters of the same family, all converts. One, Sister Ann Joseph, was to take her first vows, and her three sisters were to receive the Habit. They were not at that time the only quartet in Community, but the four Buchanans, Sisters Mary Antoinette, Agatha, Mary Bernard, and St. Felix, were all "cradle" Catholics, and entered Community singly over a period of eight years — 1849 to 1857.

The Morris family, originating in Virginia, had moved to Indiana and taken up residence at Alfordsville, near Vincennes. Sarah Morris, the oldest, Sister Ann Joseph, taught in the Knox County schools, but needing more education than she had, enrolled in night classes at St. Rose, Vincennes. Here she found her faith and her vocation. Her three younger sisters teased her about her religion, but soon the teasing stopped. One of the girls, Rebecca, wanted to know what Sarah meant when she said, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Sarah told her that it was the Mystery of the Holy Trinity — one God in three Divine Persons — and that one could not understand this mystery because creatures could not comprehend the Infinite God. Rebecca did not want to become a Catholic, but she wanted to belong to a church that had the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity. She set herself to visiting neighboring churches, some Unitarians, and some "splinter" churches, but she found that none of them held the Holy Trinity as a doctrine. Many things in nature seemed to her in her theology to be symbols of the Holy Trinity — the clover leaf, and the sun, which being one, gave light, heat, and promoted life. To satisfy

her love for the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, Rebecca became a Catholic. Mary, the third daughter, was evidently attracted by the earnestness of her sisters. She was a very quiet and gentle person. Maria, the fourth, was the youngest and full of fun. She had made up her mind to learn the Hail Mary by heart, and surprise Sarah by saying it sometime just to tease her. Instead of that, she fell in love with the Hail Mary. She thought it was a wonderful thing for any creature to be called "full of grace," by an angel, and so she became a Catholic also. The three postulants were known as Sister Euphemia, Sister Mary Victorine, and Sister Mary Christine. Sister Euphemia died young, during her first year of mission life. Sister Mary Victorine and Sister Mary Christine labored as teachers in the schools until the 1900's. Sister Ann Joseph was a teacher for a number of years, but since she had an unusual knowledge of trees and of the medicinal qualities of plants and botanical lore, she was retained at the Motherhouse to help with the farms. She was often consulted by men from Terre Haute, Greencastle, and other places, who came to ask her questions about the trees. For a long time she had charge of the beehives and was so familiar with the bees, and they with her, that she could put her hand into the hive and take out a handful of bees and they would not sting her. She was an authority on apiculture. The students of the academy and college came to visit her bee farm, veiled and gloved and hatted, and Sister Ann Joseph explained the workings of the hives, handling the bees without any protection whatsoever.

The Howes Resume Residence at the Bailly Homestead

Mother Mary Cecilia, not being a delegate to the Chapter, was not present at the election, but she arrived on the evening of August 8: One difficulty that had plagued Mother Anastasie's administration — the chilly cooperation and formal obedience of Mother Mary Cecilia — ceased to exist at the change of authority. By 1874, she had completely abandoned the idea of opening an establishment in the Bailly Homestead, aware of the opposition of the Council and the Bishop. In general, she stopped exciting sympathy for herself. Mrs. Howe and her daughters returned in 1875 from Europe where they had spent several years visiting Lourdes and historic places in France and Germany. One visit especially that was of great interest to them was to Louise Lateau, the mystic.¹ Accounts of these travels written by both Rose and Frances

Howe appeared in the *Ave Maria* and the *Sacred Heart Messenger*, and also in book form. The Howes resumed the occupancy of the Bailly Homestead on realizing that the Sisters of Providence had no intention of doing anything further about an establishment there.

Further Financial Discussions

The members of the Chapter met with the Bishop on August 16, 1874, to discuss the financial situation and to find out what could be done about it. Various propositions were considered. First of all, should the hospital be turned over to a creditor or should they try to sell it? Second, what should be done about St. John's — should they transfer their ownership of this building to a creditor? The last question met an emphatic *No* from the Chapter.

In the desperate circumstances of the preceding spring, Mother Anastasie had tried to secure a loan. She proposed the sale of St. John's to one of the Indianapolis banks. The bank offered to take over the unfinished building and give \$10,000 in cash, but the General Council of the Community would not permit the sale nor would it at first permit a mortgage. As far as St. John's was concerned, any thought of disposing of it was ruled out absolutely. Somehow or other they must keep this building which gave promise of being so worthy of retention. Suggestions had been asked before the Chapter, as to what to do with the hospital, and the Chapter authorized Mother Mary Ephrem to proceed in whatever way she deemed best.

Mother Mary Ephrem's great duty was to try to cut the losses and procure for the Community some form of stability. In her remarks to the Sisters, she made no secret of the difficulties in which the Community was involved, but she did not distress the Sisters by the full revelation of the debt. She made an earnest appeal to them to love and support the Community, to do all they could by economy and reasonable efforts to help the financial program, but above all, to put implicit confidence in God. Concerned, but not disheartened, the Sisters trusted her fully. Her message was that the work of the Sisters should go on, but that no extreme measures were to be adopted. God, she said, in closing one field of activity, hospital work, would open other fields and other projects.²

Father Buteux's Request. Minor changes at St. Mary-of-the-Woods.

In December, 1874, Father Chassé wrote to Mother Anastasie, then at Lafayette, that Father Stanislaus Buteux, the Eudist Father who had built St. Joseph Church in Terre Haute and had acted as chaplain in the first year of Mother Theodore's foundation, asked to return to Saint Mary's, as he was ill, and wanted to die there.³ Father Chassé told Mother Anastasie that he had referred the matter to Bishop de Saint-Palais, to Mother Mary Ephrem, and thought that Father McBarron, who was in charge of the Village church, should also be consulted. The Bishop gave the necessary permission, but the matter was handled in so roundabout a way that Father Buteux died in Boston on June 14, 1875, before the desired permission reached him⁴.

With all momentous affairs temporarily set aside, the Community quieted down to regain its collective poise. Soon lesser events came into view: departures for missions, the opening of the second retreat by Father Michael Corbett, S.J., for the Sisters not free to make the first one.⁵

With a true spirit of economy, Mother made some excellent changes. The large bedroom of Superior-General was made into three small rooms by putting in partitions.⁶

Mindful of the students' needs as well, she had comfortable benches put in the chapel for them. "This should have been done long ago," comments the diarist. Then follows an entry which would make any historian shudder: "Today, October 29, 1874, Sister Mary Ambrose and Sister Mary Joseph looked over old letters and destroyed some of them."

Mother Mary Ephrem made a short visit north, visiting the new house at Peru, and also the Lafayette and Indianapolis houses. On her return, she, with Sister Basilide, went to Washington, Indiana, to arrange with the pastor, Father Hugh Peythieu, about building a convent for the Sisters. To their surprise, they found that the pastor expected the Sisters, and not the parish to build it. Saddled as the Sisters were with debt, Mother did not think she could attempt it, but argument was wasted on Father Peythieu. Finally, Mother said only a positive order from the Bishop would make her consent, and to her surprise, the Bishop said, "I want that house built."⁷ Any move toward building involved Mother in complications with Mr. Doherty

who had tried to make her promise that she would not build anything till the debts were cleared, but even he had to acquiesce to the Bishop's express wish. It is hard to understand the Bishop's attitude. He knew better than anyone else the burden of debt the Sisters carried.

The Hospital Given Another Name

Sister Gertrude and Sister Mary Ambrose went to call on Mr. Rose to acquaint him with some of their difficulties and to ask his approval on the desire of the Council to dispose of the hospital. The Community had received its initial start from Mr. Rose, about \$30,000, and a five-acre plot of ground, to which Mother Anastasie had added by purchase another five acres. Mr. Rose's gifts had been free gifts and no legal obligation had been incurred in his regard, but his status, as chief and most liberal patron, entitled him to an explanation of the problem, and the courtesy of being informed of the decision. Just what disposal would be made of the hospital was not as yet decided. Mr. Rose regretted the fate of the hospital through which he had hoped to help benefit the city, but he made clear with great kindness that the Sisters were entirely free to dispose of it.⁸ There now remained the sad duty of giving up a cherished dream. "Poor hospital," notes the diarist, "officially closed on the 15th of November, 1874," after two years of operation.

The west wing of the hospital had been fitted up for occupancy and in it a few Sisters remained to retain ownership and protect the property. The cottage adjoining, used earlier by the contractors, had been made into a small school. Sister Joachim Bodin and Sister Mary Thomas Gordon continued to teach the children of the surrounding area.⁹

Something must be decided about the hospital. A mortgage of \$15,000 had been placed on it through Mr. Green of St. Louis. The Community offered him the hospital if he would cancel the mortgage, but he refused indignantly. The chief creditor, certain that he would never get back his principal, although he had received his interest of \$2,500 cash each year, and was to continue receiving it, had no sympathy with the idea of cancelling the mortgage that way and criticized the Sisters severely for making the offer. He now began to press for payment. In this crisis, three good friends of the Community, Mr. Adams of Madison, Mr. Breen of Loogootee, and Mr. Mug of Lafayette, intervened and by their determined efforts persuaded the

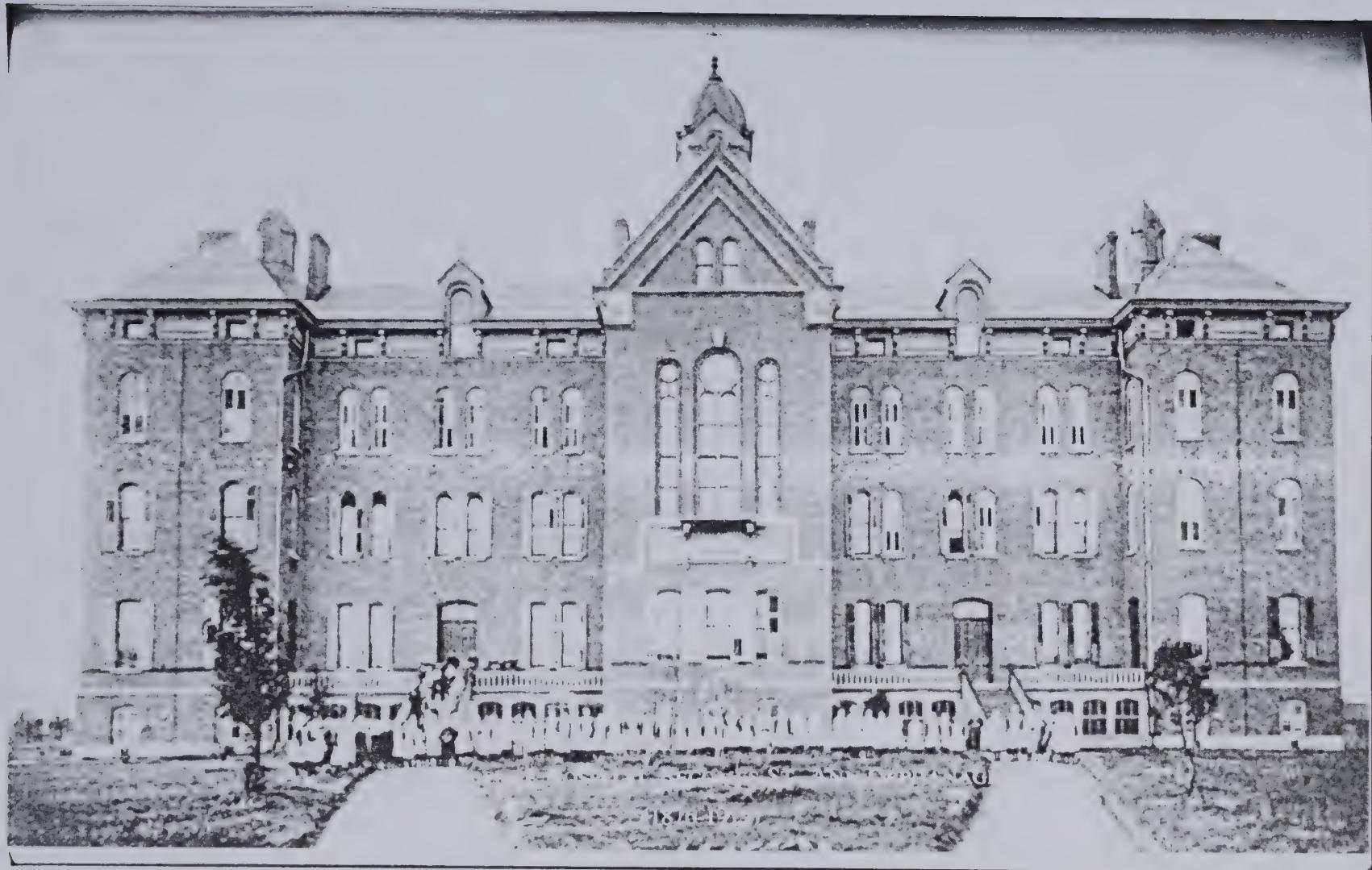
creditor to give the Sisters time. These gentlemen all bore the significant Christian name of John, and took over the role of protecting our Lady's dedicated spot. The moral and financial support of these three gentlemen was of incalculable value to the morale of the Community.¹⁰ The Sisters were beset on all sides by creditors, one leaving as another came, and even like Mrs. Malaprop's description of Cerberus,¹¹ "three gentlemen at once," all importunate, all unwilling to take any explanation.

Mother Mary Ephrem learned of current sharp practices in the business world, but it was a hard lesson. The smiling lender of money turned into a harsh creditor; and a house, a wonderful bargain when it was bought, had no value whatever when the former owner was asked to take it back in lieu of payment. Only the simple trust of a religious would have prompted such an offer.

The General Council, made up of superiors of large houses, had received letters from the Secretary, asking for advice as to the disposition of the hospital. The sagest suggestion came from Mother Mary Cecilia: persuade the diocese to buy the building for an orphanage as the St. Ann's Orphanage at Vincennes was inadequate and much in need of repair. When Mother Mary Ephrem approached Bishop de Saint-Palais on the proposal, he was delighted. The welfare of the orphans was always present to his mind. But he was hampered as to finances, and could offer only \$15,000. But even this was better than the hopelessness of trying to sell the building elsewhere.

The Bishop promised to help them later if he could and offered them an additional \$5,000 but under very strict terms which at the time they felt were very requiring, but still they had to yield. "Ten acres of land and a building worth \$125,000 sold for \$15,000," lamented Mother Mary Cecilia who had expected that sharper bargaining would have been done. Bishop de Saint-Palais himself visited Mr. Rose to make sure that no error in the deed would cause the property to revert to his heirs. The deed was flawless, and the Bishop proceeded to make the purchase. The Community immediately redeemed the mortgage on the hospital held by Mr. Green of St. Louis.¹²

Arrangements for the purchase of the hospital were virtually complete in time for the Bishop to mention the change in his Christmas circular. He urged cooperation in the donations for the orphans in the Christmas collections, their chief source of revenue. He mentioned that there were one hundred forty-six orphan girls in the girls' asylum at



Vincennes, and as many boys at St. Vincent's, Highland. He stated that the diocese had purchased Providence Hospital for a consideration inferior to the amount which a necessary addition to the female asylum at Vincennes would have cost. The Sisters of Providence had transferred to him, or rather donated for the benefit of the Orphans, five acres of land with a large new building which would afford ample accommodation for three hundred children.

The Bishop also said that he would have preferred his little ones near him; and that his regret was soothed by the thought that the generous original donor of the grounds was pleased with the destination of the building. The Bishop then recalled that increasing age and ill-health threatened the life of Mr. Rose, and he hoped that the blessing and the prayers of the orphans would ever rest on him. He closed by an appeal for funds since the transportation of the orphans would be an expense, and also said that furniture and provisions would be welcome.¹³

Mother Mary Ephrem, worn out by anxiety, was taken ill on the missions where she had been conducting regular visitations. She returned to Saint Mary's on December 22, 1875, and was gravely ill for some weeks. Her convalescence extended to January 20, 1876, but on January 10 she was able to sign the deed of sale for the hospital.

Everything was so new in the hospital and in such good order that the transfer of the orphans took place the next day. The coming of the orphan girls to the hospital was both joyful and pathetic. The children, increased in number to one hundred seventy-six, were brought by railroad from Vincennes. Their coming had been announced at St. Joseph's Church by request of the Bishop who had hoped to receive provisions and supplies from the people. Sister Mary Joseph Le Fer and Sister Natalie Ragot, the superior at St. Joseph's, went to the station to meet the children. Sister St. Felix Buchanan was the superior of the orphanage, and she entered into the festivities of the day although she disliked crowds and demonstrations very much. The parochial children of the city came in procession with a band, drums and horns, to welcome the newcomers with noisy tumult. The oldest of the orphans was not yet fourteen, and there were several little ones, two and three years old.

Omnibuses were waiting for the babies, and many kind-hearted persons picked up a child and carried her to the waiting bus. The little crippled children came last of all, and then a special ward, Cassie, a hunchback, fifty years old, but so deformed that she was scarcely three

feet high. Another little cripple, Kathleen, had been lost sight of, but was found in the wagon of a good Irishman who was calling for others to ride with him. The older and stronger orphans fell into line with the parochial children, and although the distance was about three miles, they made it in record time, owing to the long strides of Father McEvoy who headed the procession.

Sister Mary Basile O'Donnell, Sister Joachim Bodin, and about fifty persons were at the orphanage to welcome the children. The women, many of them non-Catholics, had prepared supper. Two cartloads of provisions, given by the people, had already arrived and a third came after the meal. Turkeys, chickens, hams, and sausages had been sent, and a smoking roast lamb for the little lambs of the flock was the gift of Mrs. Hulman. All necessary staple supplies were there, topped off by a cornucopia made of gilt paper and filled with candies; and there was also an orange for each orphan.

Beds were soon prepared, but before retiring the tired and thankful children assembled in the chapel where the older girls sang the *Magnificat*, Father Chassé helping with the singing and Sister Mary Borgia Larkin playing the seraphine. The orphans had their aprons filled with bonbons and fruit, but the Sisters felt that the good God would understand the reluctance of the children to put anything down until they had definite places. As for the Sisters at the hospital, they had been up since four in the morning and had nothing to eat until nearly five in the evening, when their charges were at last located in the dormitories.¹⁴ The children were delighted with the spacious playgrounds, the clean new rooms, and the pretty chapel, and most of all with the hearty welcome shown them. The girls' orphanage at Vincennes had been named for St. Ann as soon as it had been separated from the parish buildings, then known as St. Mary's. The converted hospital was put under the same patron, although the stone lintel over the front door still bore the title, "Providence Hospital," an inscription never altered. The formal gardens and the recently begun hothouses were beauty spots on the grounds, and the seasonal flowerbeds, shrubs, and young trees added to the quiet dignity of the estate.

Although Mother Anastasie was familiar with the disposition of the hospital, having been one of the General Council of Local Superiors consulted, Father Chassé wrote her a consoling letter which must have eased some of her heartache:

With the agreement of the Council and the consent of the Rt.

Rev. Bishop, the Hospital now becomes the property of the diocese of Vincennes and is to be transformed into an Orphan Asylum.

St. Rose Academy is to be transferred to the old university building, St. Ann's Orphanage, and the Brothers will occupy St. Rose's Academic Building. I believe the arrangement will be a good one. . . . I know that it is a great sacrifice that the Community makes for the diocese, but as it is for the purpose of giving a comfortable home to those poor little orphans who are so much dearer to the Sacred Heart of Jesus since they have no one but Him to depend on. I do so firmly hope that He will, in return, bestow His choicest and most abundant Graces on the good Sisters of Providence. . . . I know it will be a relief to you to know that after all, your work has turned to the honor and glory of God. . . . You could not have had any other desire.¹⁵

The chaplain at the Hospital had been transferred, and the first chaplain for the orphanage was Reverend Michael Quinlan, who lived at the orphanage and had charge of the Catholics in the vicinity. The number of Catholics in the area was increasing, and in August, 1876, a small frame church, sixty-six by thirty-five feet, was completed, and a small two-room school was built near it.¹⁶ No convent was provided as the Sisters who had previously taught on the orphanage grounds took charge of the school and continued to reside at the orphanage. The logical name and patron for the church was St. Ann.

In her request for funds, Mother Mary Ephrem found help from the Terre Haute banks which were willing to lend at the prevailing rates of interest, but the amounts needed were very great. Not only must Mother meet notes which were constantly being presented, but St. John's, Indianapolis, needed steady sums of money to keep the construction going and to preserve the Sisters' ownership. Much of the money previously borrowed had been from outside the city of Terre Haute, and much of it borrowed by friends in the interests of the Sisters. Once in great desperation, Mother Mary Ephrem approached Reverend Julian Benoit, rector of the Cathedral of Fort Wayne, and long a good friend to Mother Theodore and the Community.

Summoning her courage, for begging was never easy for her, Mother asked Father Benoit if he could lend her \$5,000. To her chagrin, he began to answer by saying, "Mother, I will never lend the Sisters of Providence any money," but he added, "I will give the

Sisters of Providence \$5,000.¹⁶ She, who had to steel her heart against rebuffs, was overcome by this unexpected kindness and could not control her tears. Good Father Benoit in addition to his kind words and his generosity also helped her by advice. She mentioned many times to the Sisters how much it meant to her to be received kindly, as he had not intended to rebuff her by his first sentence. By frequently mentioning his goodness and recommending his needs to the prayers of the Sisters, she never let them forget his kindness.

Saint Charles School, Peru, Indiana

There was still work to be done in Indiana and two more schools were put on a firm basis. In accordance with a promise given to Reverend Lawrence Lamour in June, 1873, the mission of Peru, Indiana, was commenced in the fall of 1874 by five Sisters. The Sisters named for the mission were: Sister Mary Stanislaus Hayes, Sister Mary Aurelia Laugel, Sister Mary Calixta Novotny, Sister Mary Regis Tiernan, and Sister Ambrosia Bedel. Mother Anastasie had promised Father Lamour that the mission would be opened and Mother Mary Ephrem carried out this promise. The Catholic School had been conducted previously by the Franciscan Sisters and, for some reason unknown to the Sisters of Providence, they were withdrawing. The house was very comfortable, the schoolrooms good and well furnished. Prospects indicated a possible high school there and also a very good music class. Mother Mary Ephrem felt much encouraged on her return after opening her first mission. Sister St. Joseph Regel was sent to replace Sister Mary Stanislaus as Superior, September 4, 1874, as Mother had decided that the latter should go to Seymour; and she was needed at Peru only to see that the mission began in a satisfactory manner.

Sister Mary Stanislaus Hayes had gifts as an organizer, and might have been called "Sister Foundation," to borrow a title from the Little Sisters of the Poor. She was often sent to install the Sisters on a new mission, see to their needs, and make suggestions. Her name occurs on one new mission after another. She and her sister Ann Mary Hayes,¹⁷ held positions of trust in the work of the Community. They were connected with Mother Anastasie through the marriage of their sister, Mary Hayes Riley, to Mother Anastasie's brother, James Harrison Brown.¹⁸ Sister Mary Stanislaus and her beautiful smile were well known, and her wit was equally enjoyable. During the 1868 presiden-

tial campaign, while she was in the Union Station in Indianapolis waiting for a train, an enterprising reporter came to her and asked her which candidate she favored, Grant or Seymour. She considered him impertinent as it was her first experience with opinion polls, a very new idea. "Young man, I see more than I grant," she answered to his complete mystification.

Saint Patrick's, Indianapolis

New parishes were projected in Indianapolis and the second school to be staffed by the Sisters of Providence was St. Patrick's, a parish under the direction of Reverend Peter Fitzpatrick, which gave great promise of being a large one. Originally intended to be named for St. Peter, the name was changed to St. Patrick out of regard for the wishes of the people.¹⁹ On December 7, 1874, two Sisters from St. John's Academy, Sister Gertrude Sherlock and Sister Leocadia Coughlin, began to go daily to the little two-room schoolhouse. On September 16, 1875, the parish rented a dwelling house for the use of the Sisters, conveniently close to the school. Sister Gertrude Sherlock, Sister Mary Augusta McCauley, and Sister Mary Adrian Gillen took possession, very happy to be located near the church and school, and spared the long walk back and forth which had taken needed time.

The schoolhouse was barely large enough to accommodate the many children in that quarter, and besides the children, there were many negligent and poorly-instructed Catholics who were anxious to resume their obligations. As the diarist noted, "Those animated with zeal for the salvation of souls will find in St. Patrick's parish, a wide field for their energy and devotedness."

This humble beginning was destined to expand as the years went by and the work of the Sisters attracted many young girls to the religious life.

The Centenary of the Nation

The celebration of the first centenary of American independence did not go unnoticed. On the 1876 Commencement musical and literary program in June, appeared an opening chorus, "Unfurl That Glorious Banner," "Columbia and Teutonia," a German drama adapted to the occasion; "Our American Galaxy," an essay; and a second essay, "The Work of a Hundred Years," a song, "The Old Yankee Lady of 1776," and the final triumphant "The Star Spangled Banner."

The participation of the Sisters in the National Celebration was set for July 25, 1876, when they were to have blessed a rebuilt venerated shrine in accordance with Mother Theodore's promise. It well merits our attention.

The New Shrine of St. Anne

Other promises remained to be kept. The annual procession in honor of St. Anne had been faithfully carried on at St. Mary-of-the-Woods since 1844, the first celebration of the feast after Mother Theodore's return from France and in fulfillment of her promise.²⁰ The log cabin which had been converted into a shrine was located on a little knoll some distance to the east of the convent. In succeeding years, the logs began to disintegrate and fall into ruins. From 1870 to 1874, the procession was made from the convent to the Academy oratory. In 1875, the present brick shrine was erected, and the interior plastered and decorated with iridescent shells from the Wabash River. The designs had been traced out by Mother Theodore and had been preserved by Sister Mary Joseph, and the new decoration was done under her direction. The walls were covered by a background of shells against which were placed the outlines of the NASHVILLE commemorating its preservation from destruction during the storm at sea; a map of Indiana, showing the missions opened to 1876; and the intertwined initials: A.M., "Ave Maria," J.M.J., "Jesus, Mary, Joseph," and S.A., "Saint Anne." Above the small stone built-in altar was placed the statue of St. Anne which Mother Theodore had brought from France. The shrine was blessed on July 25, 1876, by Father Chassé, and since that time, with few exceptions on account of inclement weather, the Sisters have continued to make the dutiful pilgrimage, and the woods have re-echoed with the strains of the hymn to St. Anne,²¹ the *Magnificat*, and the recessional recitation of the rosary.

In late years, the increasing number of the Sisters made it necessary to provide an additional chapel for the novices, but an exception was always made on St. Anne's day, and the novitiate, youngest members of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, may occupy places in the transept of the church at the High Mass on their "grandmother's" feast.

The National Economy Slowly Improves

The problem of disposing of the Madison Hotel and of the Griswold property has been mentioned in previous chapters,²² but the negotia-

tions were long drawn out affairs, and years were to drag on before anything like a settlement, even a losing one as these two ventures proved to be, could be effected.

One fact that may have been of financial assistance during these years concerned the wording of the vow of poverty. The Sisters of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods were following the Rule of 1835 which had been translated into English. This Rule in discussing the vow of poverty states:

Art. 132 — The Vow of Poverty in this Congregation neither deprives the Sisters of the properties they have, nor of the power to receive such as fall to them by inheritance, or come to them as donations; but they cannot dispose of them in any manner without the permission of the Superior-General.

Art. 134 — They cannot appropriate to themselves anything belonging to the Community, nor can they keep, give, buy, sell, lend or borrow anything without the permission of the Superior. They cannot receive any gift for themselves personally, but only for the establishment under the title of alms.

The Rule of 1835 was drawn up to meet the conditions of the times, and not until later were regulations issued changing the wording of the vow of poverty. In the Rule of 1887, which was given the decree of praise by the Holy See, the vow of poverty requires an act of cession, or a will, disposing of patrimony in case of the Sister's death, and of the use of the income from inheritance during her lifetime. The Rule of 1835 did not have such restrictions, and possibly patrimony or inheritance could be given by an individual Sister to the Community with the Superior's consent.

Economic conditions changed more rapidly in America than in France, and in the period following the panic of 1873 many fortunes were lost, but fortunes were gained also, and it may be that gifts and donations made to the Sisters were of great help in the financial troubles.

NOTES — CHAPTER XIV

1. Frances Howe, *A Visit to Bois l'Haine, Home of Louise Lateau*. (Baltimore: Kelly, Piet & Co., 1878).
2. Sister Anita Cotter, "Mother Mary Ephrem," *In God's Acre*, p. 74.

3. Chassé to Mother Anastasie, December 22, 1874. S.M.W.A.
4. Sister Mary Theodosia Mug, Ed., *Journals and Letters of Mother Theodore Guerin*, (St. Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana: Providence Press, 1937), p. 95.
5. Community Diary, August 19, 1874.
6. *Ibid.*, October 24, 1874.
7. Important Events, 1840-1880, pp. 212-213.
8. Community Diary, September 30, 1874.
9. Sister Mary Joseph to Sister Benita, n.d. S.M.W.A.
10. Sister Francis Cecile Miller, *God's Acre*, p. 54.
11. The three-headed dog guarding the entrance to the underworld.
12. Important Events, 1840-1880, p. 217, November 13, 1875.
13. Circular, December 8, 1875.
14. Information derived from Sister Mary Joseph's letter to her sister, Mme. Clémentine de la Corbinière, and quoted in *L'Indiana*, p. 91.
15. Chassé to Mother Anastasie, November 16, 1875. S.M.W. A.
16. Rev. Robert Gorman, *Dedication and History of the New St. Ann Church*, (Terre Haute, Indiana: St. Ann Parish Bulletin, 1953), p. 35.
17. Maternal aunts of Sister Mary Borromeo Brown.
18. Parents of Sister Mary Borromeo Brown.
19. Sister Mary Carol Schroeder, *Catholic Church in the Diocese of Vincennes, 1847-1877*, (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University, 1945), pp. 183-184.
20. Mug, Ed. *Journals and Letters*, pp. 148-156.
21. The traditional melody was that used by the pilgrims at the shrine of Ste. Anne d'Auray, and the words were composed by Sister Mary Basile O'Donnell. About 1943, when church music officials were modifying many of the too florid musical compositions, the melody was changed to Tozer's *Hymn to St. Anne*, copyrighted by J. Fischer & Bro., New York, a melody reminiscent of the traditional one.
22. Chapters **IX** and **X**.

CHAPTER XV

Our Bishop Gives Permission to Open Schools Outside Indiana

Saginaw, Kalamazoo, Marshall, Michigan; Ironton, Ohio.
Delphi, Indiana. We Decline an Opening in England.

Mother Mary Ephrem was convinced that the time had come for the expansion of the Community outside the diocese. She realized that as long as it remained within the state of Indiana, the Sisters of Providence would not be able to draw new recruits from other sources. Bishop de Saint-Palais had so consistently in the past turned a deaf ear to the opening of schools outside Indiana that the Superior-General was somewhat fearful of presenting the matter to him again. Mother felt that the two dioceses in the state had been well served and that new fields of labor would mean additional postulants and excellent experience for her teachers. However, it was through the influence of Father Arnold Damen, S.J., that the Sisters of Providence were given the desired permission. Father Damen had been going about the Midwest giving missions. Everywhere he went he spoke of the work of the Sisters of Providence, urging pastors to ask for them to teach in their schools. Bishop de Saint-Palais always had a very kindly attitude toward the Jesuit Fathers and especially toward Father Damen. His Lordship yielded to the persuasion of our good public relations man, Father Damen, and gave the necessary permission. Mother Mary Ephrem was therefore able to give affirmative answers for future dates to requests coming in from Michigan and Ohio.

Right Reverend Caspar Borgess, Bishop of Detroit, sent his permission to open schools in his diocese. Those who have read the early history of the Community will remember that Bishop Peter Paul Lefevre had offered locations at Mount Clemens and Detroit to Mother Theodore but that the projected transfer never took place. Again in 1874, Reverend J. Seybold invited the Sisters to Battle Creek, Michigan. Sister Mary Ambrose went to see the location, but reported unfavorably. Consequently, that location was postponed indefinitely.

In August, 1875, five Sisters accompanied by Sister Mary Ambrose, the Secretary, went to Saginaw, the first school accepted in Michigan,

to open St. Andrew's Academy there. The Sisters were: Sister Mary Matthew Meredith, Superior; Sister Meinrad Reimann, Sister Mary Augusta McCauley, Sister Mary James Stadelmann, and Sister Mary Cyril Kilroy. They left St. Mary's on August 25, 1875, and made the long trip, stopping overnight in Fort Wayne, and arriving in Saginaw on August 26 about nine o'clock in the evening. Father Van der Heyden, the Pastor, in concert with his parishioners, gave them a very cordial welcome. The Sisters found their convent convenient, and completely furnished. The school was large, almost new, and fully equipped. Father Van der Heyden was exceedingly good to the Sisters. He was of noble descent and had been wealthy in his own right, but the needs of poor parishes had drawn so heavily upon his resources that he was as poor as his parishioners. The Sisters were very much impressed with his distinguished manners, and in describing him, said that he was an elegant Dutchman.¹

The parish was composed of three different nationalities — Irish, French, and German. All were united in having the Sisters among them and many Protestants showed their appreciation by inquiring immediately for school terms, promising to patronize the school. A good-sized music class was formed, and the Sisters felt very much encouraged that Saginaw would be one of the most important establishments.²

Sister Mary Cyril Kilroy

We find for the first time on the list for Saginaw the mention of Sister Mary Cyril Kilroy, a young Sister destined to give many years of service. The account of her death in 1953 states that she, at ninety-nine years of age, was the longest-lived Sister in the Community annals. This statement must be revised now. On December 10, 1977, Sister Rose Francis Schwartz, very frail, but in possession of her faculties, did, by the grace of God, complete one hundred and four years of her prayerful and devoted life.

But we return now to Sister Mary Cyril whose name will be met with at intervals in this volume, and subsequent ones. She was born in Newport, Ireland, and had come to the United States at the age of fourteen. She attended school at St. John's Academy, Indianapolis, and entered the Community of the Sisters of Providence in 1870. This eager and intelligent young Sister was a great asset to the school at Saginaw, because of her interest in study, her deep piety, and her

acquaintance with many of the people in the town of Saginaw who had come from Ireland. She was not retained as an instructor very long, but soon went on to Superiorship, serving the Community in that capacity for more than fifty years, at one time being the Secretary of the Community. She retained her remarkable mental faculties until death, always being occupied, even in the time of her retirement, with something intellectual or devotional, teaching catechism to the foreign girls employed in Providence kitchen. Delicate all her life, she was able to achieve almost the longest record of years and succumbed to an attack of pneumonia³ on November 4, 1953.

Saginaw and Kalamazoo

The school day at Saginaw was a long one — eight-thirty in the morning until four in the afternoon. The first winter, fortunately, was a mild one; but fires had to be built in the chapel and community room before the community assembled. On Monday and Tuesday, the four older Sisters rose at four o'clock to do the washing. The young Sisters were never allowed to share this hard labor and all through this first year, Sister Mary Cyril slept the sleep of the just until the morning prayer bell rang.⁴

Boys were taught in the first four grades. In 1876 when the Sisters returned to the Motherhouse for their retreat, they brought with them the first postulant from Saginaw, Miss Josephine Haag, afterwards known as Sister Mary Linus, the first of a notable succession of excellent teachers.

Kalamazoo, Michigan, the second school accepted by the Sisters of Providence, opened simultaneously with the school in Saginaw. The town itself was a very beautiful place and had many wealthy citizens, but the Catholic congregation was rather poor. Sisters of another Order had had charge of the school in previous years; but for the two years before the Sisters of Providence came, there had been no Catholic school and the children were badly in need of instruction.

The four Sisters for the mission, accompanied by Mother Mary Ephrem, left St. Mary's on August 20, 1875, and were received with great cordiality by Reverend Father Tierney and the people. The schoolhouse was a large, commodious frame building with well-furnished schoolrooms. The Sisters' house was a neat and comfortable cottage in the same yard as the school, but separated from the play-

ground by a high latticework. Mother Mary Ephrem left, very well pleased with the future prospects. She left Sister Josephine Glutting, Superior, and with her, Sister Bernadette Myers, Sister Mary Hermandine McDonald, and Sister Dominica McCarthy.

Marshall, Michigan

St. Stephen's Marshall, Michigan, was the third school of the Sisters of Providence in Michigan. This establishment had been accepted through the influence of Reverend Father Damen, S.J., as early as 1874, but the Sisters did not take possession before August 22, 1876. Mother Mary Ephrem installed the Sisters in the new mission: Sister Alice McBarron, Sister Claudia Caughlin, Sister Francis Clare Sims, and Sister Marietta Conway.

The Pastor, Reverend D. Collaert, was most generous and untiring in his efforts to procure everything necessary for the Sisters. The convent was convenient and comfortably well-furnished. The parish schoolhouse was a small building, containing two rooms, one of which was for the boys and the other for the girls. There was consequently no place for the high school and music room. Measures were taken immediately by Father Collaert to vacate and furnish a house next to the Sisters for these purposes. This action was followed by a full school and a fine music class. The parish consisted mostly of good practical Catholics generous and kind to the Sisters, and well disposed to support the school.

Having established these three missions in the state of Michigan, Mother Mary Ephrem felt very much consoled and she believed that the Sisters were called to do much good in these ventures.

News of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. Jubilee of 1875.

A few events of interest occur at the end of 1874 and the first semester of 1875. About twenty-three students remained over the Christmas vacation. They joined the Sisters in Midnight Mass offered by Father Venneman who also preached the sermon. The Night Watch was kept by the Sisters according to custom.

Mrs. Zolezzi, a daughter of Mrs. Sarah Williams, had applied for the duty of postmistress at the Village. Mother Mary Ephrem signed her petition and it was granted by the Government.⁵ Before and after Mrs. Zolezzi's appointment, the Community expense books bore quarterly

items of "postage \$5.00," and an occasional order for one hundred stamped envelopes. The outgoing mail was getting heavier, and the following years, the quarterly expenditure for stamps was listed as \$22.00.

The newly-opened mission of Peru sustained a loss in the death of the young Sister Philomene Clifford. Sister St. Joseph Regel, the local superior, telegraphed to Mr. Clifford, announcing the death,⁶ and also to Mother Mary Ephrem, asking where Sister Philomene was to be buried. By some chance, the telegrams were sent to the wrong persons, and Mr. Clifford came to claim his daughter's remains and bury them in Valparaiso, her home. Mother Mary Ephrem gave the necessary permission as Sister Philomene was still a novice.

A Jubilee indulgence was granted to the Catholic world during 1875-76 by Pope Pius IX on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of his elevation to the Papacy. The conditions may seem rigid to present-day indulgence earners: four visits a day for fifteen days with prescribed prayers. The conditions varied with the number of churches in the same town, but for all — four visits daily were required, one to each church in towns which had four churches. In religious houses, four separate visits daily were stipulated.⁷ Mother Mary Ephrem arranged that all visits should be made by the Sisters at the same time. They made two visits in the morning after mass, leaving by the side door of the chapel and entering through the front door; for the second, leaving by the front door of the chapel and walking in procession past the statues in Providence Park before re-entering the chapel. The prescribed prayers were said as during the first visit. At twenty minutes of six in the evening, the same procedure was employed, followed by evening prayers.⁸

Negotiations had been going on for some time for a suitable headstone at Father Corbe's grave. On July 3, 1875, the marble slab arrived, with the wording and ornamentation in bas-relief designed by Sister Mary Joseph. The headstone was quietly put into position and became the accepted model for tombstones for future chaplains.

Commencement, 1875

The commencement of June, 1875, was the first one at which Mother Mary Ephrem presided. Of course, the holding of commencement was nothing new to Mother as she had for years presided at St. Rose Academy at that yearly function. This one, like every other

commencement, on its conclusion was pronounced the best one ever held, but there were certain features of it that were noteworthy. The exhibition hall was decorated across and entire east end with immense wreaths of evergreens and forest leaves. A large number of people attended, so many in fact that the halls and adjoining corridors were crowded, long before the opening hour. The guests were free to move around the premises and chat beneath the huge forest trees that shadowed the grounds.

The same long program took place, but that part of it which dealt with the smaller children was subordinated and much greater emphasis was laid on the work of the advanced pupils. When the program was finished, a large armchair was wheeled onto the stage and in it the venerable bishop of the diocese, Bishop de Saint-Palais, took his place with Mother Mary Ephrem and Sister Mary Liguori with him. A table piled with books was close at hand and as each award was made, the student advanced to receive it from the Bishop's hands, bowed to him, and also gracefully to the audience. After the last award had been given, a group of young ladies who had been conspicuous for amiability, good behavior and excellence in studies, came upon the stage to receive a crown, the recipient of which was to be decided by lot. Anna McSheffrey⁹ drew the lot which gave her the crown, and the Bishop placed it upon her head. Following her were the Misses Jewett and Sheerin, who knelt to receive the laureate wreath and diploma.

The students had their last dinner together while the people wandered about the grounds, eating lunch from their lunch baskets. After dinner, they were free to go through the "immense building" and see the narrow white beds and the room fittings, all scrupulously clean. The art department was another feature of display and the sewing department showed many nicely darned stockings. The return train was two hours late, but the people and the young ladies enjoyed themselves in the interval. Extra coaches were sent out, but the pile of trunks was really formidable. In the evening, the young men of the city gave a hop at the Terre Haute House for those students who remained. Toute's band furnished the music for the pleasant occasion.¹⁰

On July 9, the first celebration of Mother Mary Ephrem's feast since the election was marked by a family dinner at the institute, all the Sisters going over for the occasion. Mrs. Worthington, a friend, gave Mother twenty-five dollars for a statue of St. Joseph for the chapel. The statue was ordered, and installed on July 30, 1875.¹¹

Bishop de Saint-Palais' Declining Health

The chronic poor health of the Bishop was a grave concern. Early in January and February, repeated reports of his illness came from Vincennes, and at one time Sister Olympaide was sent to care for him. He improved about February 23, and fears for him were lightened, but not for long.

On July 31, Bishop de Saint-Palais came for a visit, but became so ill at the rectory that Sister Olympiade and Sister Basilide remained there all night caring for him. Dr. Willien was called in the morning and found the Bishop slightly improved. Added to her anxiety about the Bishop's health, Mother Mary Ephrem was concerned about the heavy rain and the rising Wabash River. For three days no train passed through the Village from Terre Haute. Finally the trains began to run very slowly across the bridge on which the water was lapping about the trestles; and men in skiffs rowed close to the bridge to rescue passengers should the train plunge into the water. About three in the afternoon on August 5, a crowd of Sisters arrived, all excited by the dangerous crossing they had made.

The Bishop attempted to say Mass in the rectory on Sunday, August 8, but the effort was too much for him and he became ill again. This time, Dr. Willien telegraphed for Dr. Patten to come from Vincennes for a consultation. Their verdict was that the Bishop was dangerously ill. Father Bede O'Connor, the Vicar General, presided at the ceremonies of vesture and profession on the Assumption at which fourteen postulants were vested and eighteen novices pronounced their first vows.¹² The Sisters who were leaving for their respective posts were permitted to pass through the Bishop's room and received his blessing.

On the 19th, Father Benoit arrived from Fort Wayne, and other priests from the Vincennes diocese came in their anxiety about the Bishop. So many came on that particular day the rectory could not provide meals for them, and they were accommodated at the Institute. By August 29, the Bishop was able to say Mass in the rectory and to give Holy Communion to a few of the Sisters who went to attend the Mass. Father Chassé's intentions were remembered in the Bishop's Mass since the chaplain had taken as his feastday June 29, the death of St. John Baptist; instead of June 24, the nativity of the Saint, which was keenly remembered as Father Corbe's feast.

A form of influenza and ague was current, due to the unhealthy dampness, but the Bishop's illness was due to a graver and more

chronic trouble. His increasing weight was always a source of concern to the doctor and to the Bishop himself, but there seemed to be no way in which he could be helped. There was always present the danger of apoplexy, and averting this required care and rest, two things almost impossible to a pioneer bishop. However, slowly but steadily, he began to get better, but it was not until September 15, 1875, that he was able to return to Vincennes. Within a week another great loss came to him in the unexpected death of Father Bede O'Connor, who died on September 24 after a few days' illness. Father Bede had been appointed to succeed Father Corbe as vicar general, and his death was a great sorrow to Bishop de Saint-Palais. Within three years the diocese had lost three notable priests: Father Corbe in 1872, Father Hippolyte Dupontavice in 1874, and now Father Bede.

An Invitation to England

Invitations to open schools came in thick and fast, but scarcity of Sisters always limited acceptance. One surprising request came from a Reverend John M. Denis, a priest at West Granstead, Sussex, England, asking for a colony of Sisters. He offered a fine property and held out bright hopes of success. All things were ready, he said, to start a flourishing establishment, but a pretty large outlay of money would be required.

This request was sent to the General Council of Local Superiors, and Mother Mary Cecilia, always kind to Mother Mary Ephrem, advised not entering into any definite negotiations unless invited to come by the Bishop of the English diocese. After some consideration, Mother Mary Ephrem did not wait for the formal invitation from the Bishop, but wrote to Father Denis, stating the conditions on which the Community might accept his proposal in the future, but also the impossibility of assuming any expense at the time (1875).

This prospect was a very interesting one and in a better and happier time it might have been considered favorably; but the matter of transportation and the living expenses, with no knowledge of the type of work they would have to assume, presented almost unsurmountable difficulties. There was something inviting, too, in the nearness of England to France, but the difficulties which France had just gone through in the Franco-Prussian War cancelled that favorable aspect. The matter was out of the question then — even if it could be considered later.¹³

Ironton, Ohio

On the invitation and with the permission of Right Reverend S. H. Rosecrans, the pastor at Ironton, Ohio, asked for Sisters for his mission. Ironton was a town of some importance on the Ohio River, more than one hundred miles east of Cincinnati. It was not connected by rail with any other place; the only way of reaching it was by the Ohio River and when that was frozen, the town was completely isolated from the rest of the world. This last fact was not known when the mission was accepted. The Superior named "Good Sister Foundation," Sister Mary Stanislaus, had had considerable experience on the missions and since the distance was so very great, Mother Mary Ephrem did not accompany the three Sisters who went to this mission. Sister Mary Constantia Michael and Sister Mary Ellen Donelan were the two who accompanied Sister Mary Stanislaus. They left St. Mary's, August 17, 1876, and arrived two days later about noon. Their reception was anything but encouraging. The people seemed to know nothing of their coming, and the pastor received them with indifference. Previously he had shown some desire to have the Sisters. The account given by Sister Mary Stanislaus was so gloomy that serious doubts were entertained of the permanency of the mission. Indeed, all the circumstances of the opening were so unfavorable that nothing but pure zeal for the salvation of souls could have caused the Sisters to remain. The Catholic portion of the population was composed chiefly of laboring men employed in the numerous iron factories of the place; at the time of the Sisters coming, these factories were nearly all closed, leaving men with large families almost destitute. Consequently, the majority of the children had to be taught for nothing. The crowd of children and their extreme need of instruction aroused the faith and zeal of the Sisters and gave them courage at least to commence work in the midst of the most unfavorable surroundings.¹⁴

The mission was closed in June, 1877, as the situation did not improve. The poverty of the people was not the drawback, but the financial straits in which the Sisters of Providence were involved made the carrying on of this school impossible. The Sisters received no salaries, had to bear the expense of their own maintenance and their transportation to and from the mission. The Sisters did all they could to help the children and carried out the prediction that their work would be a work of pure zeal. But there was one good boy there, John Healy,

who treasured his good conduct card and showed it with pride sixty years later.¹⁵

Delphi, and Valparaiso, Indiana

Indiana, too, received a little attention in the opening of a mission at Delphi. Sister Mary Cyril did not remain long as an isntructor, and on August 28, 1876, we find her opening this mission at Delphi, escorted by Mother Mary Ephrem and accompanied by Sister St. Fidelis Ackerman and Sister Mary Emmanuel Walker. Sister Mary Cyril was young and had to wait until her twenty-first birthday before she could pronounce her Vows since this was the custom at the time, and not until profession, could she hold the position of Superior even in such a small place as Delphi. The pastor, Reverend John Bleckmann, whose highest ambition had been to procure the Sisters of Providence for his school, was overjoyed at their coming. His predecessor had applied for Sisters in 1871 but it was impossible for the Community to spare them then. The repeated and urgent entreaties of Father Bleckmann were finally successful; and the school seemed likely to prosper as the favorable beginning indicated. The church was dedicated to St. Joseph and the school was put under the same patronage. The school was a small one — forty by fifty feet in dimension — and had been erected by the Reverend A. B. Oechtering (later Monsignor). Previous to the Sisters' coming, Father Bleckmann had inquired from Mother Mary Ephrem what was necessary to provide for the comfort of the Sisters, thus they found everything in readiness. There was no convent, but the Sisters lived in a rented house, some little distance from the school. The school itself was sufficiently large to accommodate the sixty-six pupils who presented themselves the first day. The congregation was small, but its members were remarkably generous and left nothing undone to show their appreciation of having the Sisters in their midst.¹⁶

The missions of Delphi and Valparaiso were not far apart, and while communication between them was infrequent, the Sisters did not feel as isolated as they might otherwise have felt.

The Philadelphia Exposition in 1876 had an Indiana display, but no record shows that St. Mary-of-the-Woods participated in it. Officials and representatives of many nations came to the Exposition and in one of them the children of St. Paul's School, Valparaiso, were all interest. The papers had announced that Dom Pedro II, Emperor of Brazil, would pass through Valparaiso, and in compliment to the town named

for the seaport of Brazil's neighbor country, Chile, the train would stop for a few minutes. The children's minds were distracted by the vision of crowns, ermine, and the appurtenances of a foreign potentate; but when the train stopped, they were disappointed. A dignified man with greying beard and mustache, "looking like grandpa," was a disillusion. No crown, no sceptre, no jewels, just an ordinary man!¹⁷ It was this good sovereign who had said more than once that if fate had not destined him to be an emperor, he would have liked to have been a teacher.

In spite of the financial pressure, and the curtailing of expense, necessary outlays of money multiplied. Notice came from the Mayor's office that the city wished to take twelve feet in from the Griswold property in order to widen Deming Street. Sister Basilide engaged a lawyer to represent the Community in the subsequent negotiations.¹⁸ The bridge between Providence and the Institute grounds had to be torn down and rebuilt.¹⁹ A sewer had to be dug through the ravine at an outlay of fifteen hundred dollars, but was warranted only for five years.²⁰ Some bargaining also took place as Sister Basilide arranged with Dr. Willien, now the convent physician, that his visits thereafter would be five dollars instead of the seven dollars formerly paid.²¹

Sister Frances de Chantal Dufficy's property presented some problems. According to Major Dufficy's will, she was to receive the income from some coal shaft property during her lifetime, but at her death it was to pass to Mr. Dunigan, the Dufficy's lawyer. Mother Mary Ephrem and Sister Frances de Chantal decided to give the property to Mr. Dunigan.²² This arrangement relieved the Community of the payment of taxes, and was agreeable to Mr. Dunigan as he was then free to lease or sell the coal shaft.

Further Developments on Griswold Property

By the middle of September, 1876, negotiations were completed for the purchase of the Griswold property by Mr. Shryer. Mr. Shryer agreed to purchase the Griswold property for \$15,000 and his dwelling house situated in another part of Terre Haute. In the meantime, it was necessary to borrow money again to pay the amount due Mr. Griswold in order to give a clear title to Mr. Shryer. As soon as this was done, the Community deeded the property to Mr. Shryer and received from him his payment and the deed for his house.

From the time of the Griswold sale until January 22, 1877, negotiations were carried on with the Franciscan Fathers to regain the old St. Joseph school property. The Community agreed to pay \$12,000 in the following way: the note given by the Franciscan Fathers for \$7,000 was returned to the Fathers; the Community then gave its note to Father Joseph for \$5,000 payable on or before one year after date. The total was \$2,000 more than the Fathers had paid for the original property, but they were indemnified for \$2,000 worth of improvements which they had made.

Election day, October 26, 1876, called forth earnest prayers from the Community for a wise choice of President of the United States. The workmen went to Terre Haute to cast their votes. The Sisters kept five candles burning in the chapel and offered all their prayers for the blessing of God on the election. The result of the presidential election was the choice of Rutherford B. Hayes and William A. Wheeler.

Very surprisingly, a bill came in from a Mr. F. A. Ross, claiming \$750 as his fee for the sale of the Griswold property. The Community rejected his claim as it had never engaged his services and never made any arrangement with him. Mother Mary Ephrem and Sister Basilide consulted Mr. Voorhees, a prominent lawyer of Terre Haute, regarding this suit and engaged him to represent them. The hearing was set then for April 23, 1877, but was postponed until Friday, September 27.

Postponed again till October 25, 1877, the lawsuit had a further delay because Mother Mary Ephrem was not at home. Finally it was set for May 23, 1878, with Judge Carlton presiding. Mr. Ross, the plaintiff, could not produce a witness or any evidence supporting his claim, and he lost the suit. All the court officials were very kind to Mother Mary Ephrem and Sister Basilide. Their attitude was encouraging, but Mother felt that prayers to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and the candle burning as a reminder before the Tabernacle, obtained the verdict.

NOTES — CHAPTER XV

1. Sister Mary Borromeo, "Thirty-five Years in Michigan," *Michigan Catholic Weekly*, May 25, 1952.
2. Book of the Foundations, p. 36.
3. Necrology, November 4, 1953.
4. *Michigan Catholic Weekly*, May 25, 1952.
5. Community Diary, December 28, 1874.

6. January 13, 1875.
7. Pastoral Letter of Bishop de Saint-Palais, April 11, 1875.
8. Community Diary, May 15, 1875.
9. Mother of Mary Allman Delaney, 1899; Margaret Allman McShane, '01; and Anna Allman Munday, '07; and great-grandmother of Mary Bridget Allman, '65; and Mary Faith Delaney, '66, all graduates of St. Mary-of-the-Woods.
10. *Terre Haute Express*, July 1, 1875.
11. This statue was destroyed in the fire of 1889.
12. Among the postulants for Reception were: Sisters Mary Alberta Comer, Mary Edmond Ready, Anita Cotter, Mary Remigia O'Brien, Mary Agnita McCabe, Domitilla Tehan, Dolores McCauley, Mary Magdalen Carroll. Novices for Vows: Sisters Mary Aurelia Laugel, Mary Maurice Connors, Mary Cyril Kilroy, Symphorosa Fisher, Mary Regis Tiernan, Mary Columba Condon, Pierolina Guthneck, Eleanor Michael, Adelina Lumley, Mary Kostka Schurger, Mary Bernadine McKenna, Mary Eustelle Moylan.
13. Sister Mary Joseph to Mother Anastasie, December 18, 1875.
14. Important Events, 1840-1880, February 21, 1878.
15. Father of Sister Ann Healy, S.P.
16. Book of the Foundations, p. 39.
17. Reminiscences of Valparaiso by Sister Celestine Bloomer. Typescript.
18. Community Diary, November 2, 1875.
19. *Ibid.*, August 21, 1876.
20. *Ibid.*, September 3, 1876.
21. *Ibid.*, September 7, 1876.
22. *Ibid.*, September 7, 1876.

CHAPTER XVI

Fitting Tributes to the Devoted "Father of the Orphans"

An American-born Prelate Succeeds Him

Commencement Day, June 27, 1877, was a notably beautiful occasion. There were so many guests present for the exercises that the recital hall was not large enough to accommodate them, and the refectory was vacated and used for the program. Even then it was not possible to seat everyone. The class of 1877 numbered six young ladies, the parents of whom were well known to the Bishop and the Sisters. Mr. Daniel Doherty of Madison was present to see his daughter Mary receive her diploma, as were also the parents of Carrie Brake, Fanny Brand, May Rogers, and Lillian Scholl. Mr. John W. Mug of Lafayette was there also to see his daughter Nellie receive honors. Nellie Mug was a slight, gentle girl, unusually gifted in musical and literary composition. One would indeed be a seer if he were able to foretell the immense contribution that Nellie, as Sister Mary Theodosia, was to give to the Community by her research into Mother Theodore's life, her assiduity in the translation of letters and old documents, and her graceful presentation of the history of the early years of the Community. But Nellie was just a blithe young girl that day, and enjoyed the excitement and the congratulations showered on the group of graduates.

Bishop de Saint-Palais was at his best that day. He had had a heavy schedule of work in the month preceding, conferring Holy Orders at St. Meinrad's,¹ and making quick trips from Vincennes to towns in the diocese. But at the Commencement Exercises, His Excellency met many friends: Father Henry Meissner lately appointed to Peru, Father Frederick Weichmann, the first resident pastor of Wabash, Indiana, and the Reverend Julian Benoit, rector of the Cathedral, Fort Wayne. Old friends among the laity were Daniel Doherty, Mrs. Omer Bearss of Peru, Mrs. Frank Prenatt of Madison, Mr. John Roche of Huntington, and scores of others.

The next morning the Bishop rose early and went out into the yard to get the fresh air, but as he stepped out on the grass, he fell, stricken with

apoplexy. Father Benoit happened to hear the noise of the fall, and hurried to help him. Father Benoit and Father Chassé were able to bring the Bishop into the house, but he could no longer speak. At nine in the morning, the doctor gave no hope for his recovery. Father Benoit held the stole before the Bishop to let him know he was going to anoint him. The Bishop acquiesced by a look, but after receiving the sacrament, lapsed into unconsciousness until four in the afternoon when he died. Many of the Sisters were at his deathbed, and at once they hurried to the chapel to make the Way of the Cross for the repose of his soul.

The bishops of the province and the clergy of the diocese were informed of the death by telegraph. Mr. Roche and Mr. Doherty washed and prepared the remains, and Dr. Willien performed the embalming. Father Bessonies, who had recently been appointed vicar general, came on the evening train, and Fathers Meissner and Wiechmann remained to be of service.

Next day the hearse arrived with a beautiful casket, and as soon as the remains were placed in it, the funeral cortège left from the Bishop's room in the rectory for Terre Haute to make connections with the train for Vincennes. Mother Mary Ephrem, Sister Basilide, Mother Anastasie, Sister Joachim, and Sister Maurice accompanied the remains. The orphan girls who were waiting at the Terre Haute side of the river bridge came to the station, and there they were permitted to see their father and protector for the last time. The railroad company had arranged a special funeral coach as a tribute of respect.²

At five in the evening all stores on Main and Second Streets, Vincennes, were closed, and four thousand citizens went to the station. At a quarter of six, the Evansville and Terre Haute train, heavily draped in black, drew in. Father Ernest Audran, rector of the Vincennes Cathedral, assisted by Fathers Moffett, Doyle, and others blessed the remains prior to their transfer to the little chapel of St. Rose where the solemn Office of the Dead was to be chanted. Four black horses, caparisoned in black, led by four gentlemen of the parish, drew the hearse. Immediately after the hearse came Reverend August Bessonies of Indianapolis, Reverend J. B. Chassé and Reverend Eugene F. McBarron of St. Mary's, and Reverend Michael McEvoy, O.F.M., of Terre Haute, and a large number of clergy.

"The procession of sorrowing friends was preceded by the company of priests, chanting the prayers appointed by the Church for the dead. The parish societies followed the mourners with banners draped in

mourning. The procession moved down Main Street to Second. The casket was carried to St. Rose Chapel on South Second where the remains lay in state. After High Mass on Sunday, they were moved to the Cathedral to lie in state until Tuesday morning, the day of the funeral. Thousands of people passed by the bier. The Solemn Requiem Mass was celebrated by Archbishop Purcell of Cincinnati, assisted by Bishop Baltes of Alton,³ Bishop Foley of Chicago, Bishop John Lancaster Spalding of Peoria, Bishop Dwenger of Fort Wayne, and more than a hundred priests. Bishop Dwenger delivered the funeral oration.⁴

Special trains brought people from Fort Wayne, Evansville, Indianapolis, and Terre Haute, and the funeral procession, observed an eye-witness, "was the most imposing one that Vincennes had ever seen or was ever likely to see."⁵ The place of interment was in the crypt of the Cathedral.

Bishop de Saint-Palais was truly a pioneer bishop and had borne all the privations of the early missionaries. He was a member of a wealthy French family, but answering the call of vocation, he studied for the priesthood at the seminary of Saint-Sulpice. After his ordination on May 28, 1836, he met Bishop Bruté who was recruiting missionaries for Indiana. Immediately the young Father de Saint-Palais offered his services and with seventeen others, came to the vast diocese of Vincennes. Of this group, only two, Fathers Benoit and Neyron, outlived him.

He worked among the Indians with a truly apostolic spirit. In 1837 he labored among the scattered missions of Daviess County; in 1842-43 he was in Chicago (then a part of the Vincennes diocese); in 1844 he was in Michigan City, and later in Logansport, Indiana. Everywhere he went he inspired confidence by his sincerity, zeal, and deep piety. Bishop Bazin appointed him vicar general of the diocese, and recommended him as his successor. Rome approved the choice, and Bishop Maurice de Saint-Palais was preconized Bishop of Vincennes on October 3, 1848, and consecrated on January 14, 1849.

He was as energetic as a bishop as he had been indefatigable as a priest. The diocese was a vast one; but at Bishop de Saint-Palais' request, the diocese of Fort Wayne was erected, and Vincennes narrowed down to the southern half of the state. Yet, at the time of his death, he left it with a Catholic population estimated at nearly ninety thousand souls, served by one hundred and four priests. There were

one hundred sixty-eight churches and chapels, five male and seven female orphanages, two hospitals, and a total of twenty thousand children attending Catholic schools. Besides this, at St. Meinrad's Seminary, there were twenty-six students preparing for the priesthood.

Bishop de Saint-Palais was a zealous and pious man, and if he did not succeed in doing all that he desired to do, he left works after him that will keep his memory green in the hearts of the people for whose salvation he spent himself for so many years.⁶

Sincere tributes were paid to the memory of Bishop de Saint-Palais.

This is a great loss for the United States, because there was no person so much loved by everyone. Protestant and Catholic alike. Also, there was no man like him so learned, so prudent, and so much attached to Rome that I think it will be impossible to find another like him. What you tell me of Father Doebbnier of Jeffersonville surprised me very much and I think that this fact and the letter of the Archbishop of Cincinnati to Rome have been the real cause of the death of so holy a bishop. I am sure that at present he is in heaven receiving his well-deserved reward for so many labours borne for the glory of God, and on behalf of everyone.⁷

The difficulty referred to by Canon Sambucetti concerned some dissatisfaction of the German clergy in southern Indiana who accused the Bishop of favoritism, reported him to Archbishop Purcell, who, in turn, was said to have written to Rome. German priests had been placed over parishes where German people predominated, at their own request, and as these parishes were usually small and in rural districts, the German clergy felt that the priests of other nationalities were favored in being given the larger urban parishes and that they were treated unjustly.⁸ The difficulty had become much more involved just before the Bishop's death.

In the circular of Reverend August Bessonies, administrator of the diocese, to the pastors concerning the Christmas collection, he says:

There are three hundred orphans, and the only source of revenue is the Christmas collection. Their Father and Bishop (and he was surely a father to them) is now no more and they are orphaned indeed. . . . Our late lamented Bishop by strict economy, personal privations, and unceasing care for the last twenty-nine years has succeeded in building two orphan asylums,

second to none in the west, which will be lasting monuments to his love for the fatherless.

In one of his Christmas circulars, the Bishop himself said what might fittingly be called a tribute to his own great heart:

I always earnestly plead the cause of the orphans, and observations have been made in regard to my affection for them. . . . If this be a fault, I freely confess that I dearly love little children, and especially orphan children, but I can never love them as much as they are loved by our Divine Master who severely reprobated the disciples when they prevented the children from coming to Him: "Let them come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of God."¹⁰

Archbishop Purcell, Bishop Dwenger, and Father Benoit came to Saint Mary's after the funeral and remained overnight to say Mass on July 4.

Mother Mary Ephrem's feast, July 9, passed very quietly as all the Sisters, Mother included, were still shocked and grieved at their loss. For twenty-nine years the Bishop had been their guide, and the name "Father Bishop", given him in affection, was an index to their relationship. From the time when he, as a traveling missionary in Indiana, met the Sisters of Providence, until the end of his life, Bishop de Saint-Palais had always been their friend.

As early as 1849, Mother Theodore wrote of him, "If we do not accomplish much good, it will not be the fault of this prelate. . . . He is a true father to our Community. In our days of trial, he was our support and consolation."¹¹

This prediction was more than fulfilled. Under his understanding support, the Community developed and breathed on air of freedom. In general the Bishop had been most liberal in acceding to the requests of the Superiors, but for a long time he had opposed taking schools outside Indiana. Finally he gave this permission which allowed the Community to open schools in Michigan, and to draw to itself subjects of remarkable ability. His benevolence had been so constant a factor in the lives of the Sisters that his death plunged them into anxiety as well as sorrow.

Resignation of Sister Basilide. Community Affairs.

August 7, 1877, was the day for the triennial elections. Reverend August Bessonies, Administrator of the diocese, presided. The Chap-

ter meeting was quiet and uneventful. Mother Mary Ephrem and the members of her Council, with the exception of Sister Basilide, were re-elected. Sister Basilide, because of her declining health, had asked not to be considered for the office of Econome which she had held for twenty-one years. Sister John Francis O'Donaghue was elected to replace her.

After Beads on the evening of October 14, Father Chassé came into the sanctuary and read to the Community the act of resignation of Sister John Francis. The document was signed by Reverend August Bessonies, Administrator of the diocese. No further explanation was offered, but it was generally known that a great timidity, always characteristic of Sister John Francis, made her fearful of the decisions which her trying post entailed. Realizing that she was throwing much of the burden back on Mother Mary Ephrem, Sister John Francis resigned.

Sister Eugenia Gorman was called home from Vincennes to replace in the office of econome, and Sister Joachim sent to the boys' orphanage to replace her. Censure had been passed on Sister Eugenia at the time of her activity against Mother Anastasie, and the decision was made that she could not thereafter be elected to a major office. In this emergency, her transfer was regarded as only a substitution, and she was not elected to the same post in 1880.

Sadness and death seemed to surround Mother Mary Ephrem. Sister Mary Liguori Smith, one of the Council members, had been failing in health. She had contracted a heavy cold which she could not shake off. She went to the Good Samaritan Hospital in Cincinnati where the doctors gave her six months to live. Sister Mary Liguori was the niece and ward of John Roche, of Huntington, Indiana. She had had a troubled childhood, spent with a stepmother who had been very unkind to her. "Uncle John" saw to it that she enrolled for two years at St. Mary-of-the-Woods at the Institute, and later he fostered her vocation to the religious life. A brilliant mathematics teacher, she had served as Superior of the Academy for several years before being elected to the Council in 1874.

The news of the death of Mlle. Eugénie Le Fer de la Motte came on October 15. Her death was a great sorrow to Sister Mary Joseph because Mlle. Eugénie was the last of the Le Fers at Saint-Servan. It was always said of Mlle. Eugénie that no sooner had she finished

packing one box of articles for St. Mary-of-the-Woods than she began to see what she could find for another one.

There were several consoling happenings during the year. Mrs. Mary Leroy Fitch, a former pupil, made her abjuration of the Protestant religion in the village church and two days later, on December 3, 1877, three persons were baptized in the chapel.

Sister Mary Joseph, anticipating Mother Anastasie's feast (the third commemoration on Christmas), wrote her the news of the baptisms:

How often my thoughts have gone to you on hearing our dear Josie Cheek, now Mrs. Symes Hunt, speak of dear Sister Anastasie of sixteen years ago, and how kind and devoted you were to her. The good seed has at last germinated, and she was baptized with her little girl on the evening of Saint Francis Xavier's feast, finishing the day so beautifully begun by the baptism of Viola Hunter.¹² Josie made her First Holy Communion on the feast of the Immaculate Conception.

She is the grandniece of our Cardinal Archbishop Saint-Marc, of Rennes, and has two aunts Religious of the Sacred Heart. The latter did not know Josie's family were Protestant.¹³

The baptisms were always regarded as a blessing on the work of the Community, but still the Sisters were wary of over-encouraging girls in the flush of fervor to join the Church. Careful instructions in the obligations they wished to assume, and full consent and knowledge of parents for the step were always insisted on. Father Chassé, too, was of the same mind, and Miss Viola Hunter had a difficult time of it with him when she wished to be baptized. He insisted that she have her father's consent, but in 1877, when she was no longer in school, she came from Paris, on a hand car, the story goes, to spend some time at St. Mary's. Primarily her intention was to attend the mission which was given by the Paulist Fathers in the village church. Father Brady, the Paulist, had no such scruples in regard to a young woman out of school, and performed the baptism; Father Chassé, his responsibility transferred, acted as one of the sponsors.

The Death of Pope Pius IX. Bishop Chatard Appointed.

On February 8, on the receipt of the news of Pius IX's death, Requiem Mass was offered in the chapel for His Holiness. Since there had been eight months' delay between the death of Gregory XVI and the election of Pius IX, it might have been expected that a long interval

would ensue; and the Community felt doubly bereaved of its Bishop and its Sovereign Pontiff. But the political conditions in Italy did not restrict the action of the conclave, and to everyone's surprise, Cardinal Joachim Pecci (Leo XIII) was elected to the papacy on February 21, 1878, two weeks from the time of the Pope's death.

The little world of St. Mary-of-the-Woods, like other worlds in which women predominate, was full of rumors as to the probable choice of bishop. "I keep count of all the names I hear," wrote Sister Mary Joseph, "and now I have come to the tenth." Among the names listed were Abbot Marty of St. Meinrad's, Father Rademacher, Father Bessonies, and Monsignor Chatard.¹⁴

Finally word came that a new Bishop had been appointed for Vincennes. On March 7, 1878, a postal from Father Bessonies announced that Dr. Chatard had been appointed. Later news came that he would be consecrated on the feast of the Patronage of St. Joseph, May 12, at the American College in Rome by Cardinal Franchi. The installation ceremonies were slated to take place at the Cathedral in Vincennes, and in that historic building, the Most Reverend Francis Silas Chatard would assume the government of his diocese. He notified the Vicar General, however, that while he was installed as Bishop of Vincennes, he had been instructed to move his See to Indianapolis. The chief factors in determining this decision were the central location of Indianapolis, its rapid population growth, and its accessibility to all parts of the state. It was even then realized that at some not too far distant time a third diocese might be formed in the southern part of the state.¹⁵

The new Bishop's arrival was awaited with great anxiety. Both clergy and laity viewed many possible changes since the Bishop was coming direct to them from the center of Christendom. On the day of his consecration the Bishop, following the custom of bishops consecrated in Rome, addressed a pastoral letter to his faraway diocese of Vincennes. The letter, however, was not addressed from Rome, but from a retreat house, and signed "in true Wiseman-like style, 'outside the Ostian gate,'"¹⁶ as protocol indicated that no one except the Holy Father send a document marked "Rome." Of this communication, the New York *Freeman's Journal* says: "Bishop Chatard's pastoral reminds us of better times and ages past. It is strong in doctrine, sweet in exhortation, loving in memories of the past, and exceedingly admirable in its definitions."

Father Chassé read Bishop Chatard's pastoral to the Community.¹⁷ It was to be expected that a prelate long identified with the American College in Rome would put forth a strong plea for Catholic education. The Bishop began the letter by a gentle tribute to the bishops who had preceded him in the diocese of Vincennes, speaking of them as

... those fathers of the faith who laid the foundation of this church. . . . We say nothing of that remarkable example of piety, Simon Gabriel Bruté, first Bishop of Vincennes, whose memory is a benediction with you. We say nothing of the other bishops whose virtues are well known to you. We shall speak of him who, lately your Bishop, has been called to receive his reward, Maurice de Saint-Palais. He was indeed a man distinguished for the qualities of his mind and heart, full of dignity, of life, noble of birth, and still nobler by reason of his virtues. He ruled this church of Vincennes for nearly thirty years. Under his guidance, it flourished, grew steadily, and by his prudence and wisdom was preserved from whatever might have troubled his people. So great a blessing did this pastor merit for his flock that the diocese of Vincennes may well be held as a model to others.¹⁸

The great appeal of the letter was the need for giving youth a sound Catholic education. As a pledge of his interest, Bishop Chatard had obtained from Pope Leo XIII the Apostolic Benediction for all who had in any way contributed to the progress of the schools, for the pupils, and for all those who directed them.

In conclusion, the Bishop expressed his surprise and pleasure at the number of churches, religious houses, and institutions of charity already established in the diocese, and paid due tribute to the sacrifices which the laity made in contributing to these good works.

Bishop Chatard's Itinerary to Saint Mary's

Bishop Chatard did not come directly to Indiana as some time was needed to wind up his affairs at the American College, and another interruption occurred at Baltimore, where the Bishop met the members of his family, including his sister, Sister Juliana, D.C., of Emmitsburg, Md. En route to Vincennes, he halted in Cincinnati, Ohio, on Wednesday, August 8, to pay his respects to his metropolitan archbishop, the aging Most Reverend John B. Purcell. While in Cincinnati, Bishop Chatard obtained a leave of absence for Dr. Henry Moeller, a brilliant

young cleric whom he had known at the American College. Bishop Chatard then appointed Dr. Moeller as his secretary, but this arrangement did not last long. When Bishop William R. Elder came as coadjutor to the failing Archbishop, he recalled Dr. Moeller, appointing him as his own secretary on July 14, 1880.¹⁹ Bishop Chatard's itinerary specified stops at Vincennes on Saturday, the eleventh, and at Indianapolis on the twelfth. Father Bessonies and Father Chassé went to Cincinnati on August 6, while the Sisters peacefully made their retreat under Father Dominic Niederkorn, S.J.

Father Chassé brought the word that the Bishop would arrive at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods on the evening of August 14. Nothing could have pleased the Community more as it was possible to offer a formal greeting without interrupting the retreat to receive him. After dinner on that day, Father Chassé went to the depot in Terre Haute to meet the train from Vincennes. About five o'clock, the carriages entered the grounds, and immediately guns were fired and bells were rung until the Bishop and clergy had entered the chaplain's residence. Shortly after, Mother Mary Ephrem and the members of the Council went there to pay their respects to the new Bishop. At six o'clock, the Sisters went in procession as far as the gate to the chaplain's residence to escort the Bishop to the chapel. The eyes so modestly cast down during the retreat were now free to admire the arch above the gate with its greeting, "We have desired to see this day." Farther on at the entrance to the chapel, they saw the decoration in green and gold letters, expressing a welcome, "Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini." Within the chapel, Father Chassé addressed the Bishop in the name of the Community. Bishop Chatard responded and then gave Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament.²⁰

On leaving the chapel, Mother Mary Ephrem invited His Lordship to the parlor where the novices for profession and the postulants for reception were presented and received the Bishop's blessing. On the Assumption, the Bishop was assisted in giving the Habit by Father Bessonies and Father Chassé. Fathers Merz, McEvoy, and Niederkorn, S.J., were also present. The ceremonies were held at the Offertory of the Mass, but later Bishop Chatard changed that as it was too much like the ordination of priests.²¹ Rev. Julian Benoit arrived on the noon train. The Bishop and clergy spent the noon recreation together at the Institute which had been turned over to them during the Bishop's stay.

On August 17, the Bishop, Father Chassé, and Father Benoit went to Terre Haute in the large carriage to see the children at St. Ann's Orphanage; then on to Indianapolis in the afternoon as the civic reception was to take place in that city on the morrow.²² A vast crowd made up of clergy, societies and individual people received Bishop Chatard at the depot in Indianapolis and conducted him to his residence on Georgia Street. Governor Williams and Mayor Caven bade him welcome. Before the celebration of the Pontifical High Mass by the Bishop at St. John's Church the next morning, the Very Reverend August Bessonies, Administrator, formally surrendered his administratorship. The Bishop, in his response, and addressing the people said, "The success of my life and yours must be obtained through prayer."

On November 11, 1878, Bishop Chatard summoned all the clergy of the diocese to the holding of a diocesan synod at St. John's Church on December 10. This was the second synod of the diocese of Vincennes, the first being held under Bishop de la Hailandière in 1844.

The coming of Bishop Chatard to the diocese of Vincennes brought some easing of the national conflicts which had become troublesome during Bishop de Saint-Palais' administration. An American-born Bishop, although of remote French descent, he appeared to be less French than his name indicated. His education in the East, first for the medical profession, then later in Rome for the priesthood, aroused no opposition among the German clergy. His years of experience in the Holy City qualified the Bishop in a special way to meet the growing needs of a diocese which was rapidly changing from a rural environment to an urban one. He was well known for his financial acumen and for his polished manner. He had been directed in Rome to fix his residence at Indianapolis, but to retain the title of Bishop of Vincennes. Later, by an Apostolic Brief, dated March 23, 1898, the title of the diocese was changed to "Diocese of Indianapolis," but by the same Brief, St. Francis Xavier was retained as the principal patron of the diocese.²³ The choice of Indianapolis as residence was popularly approved in view of the growth of that town and its accessibility to the East and West. Those who loved the historic old Saint Francis Xavier Cathedral could not help feeling the change. "Poor Vincennes!" said Mother Mary Ephrem when she heard of the removal of the see to Indianapolis.

NOTES — CHAPTER XVI

1. Kleber, *History of St. Meinrad Archabbey*, p. 245.
2. Notes from Community Diary, June 28-29, 1877.
3. Now diocese of Belleville, Illinois.
4. *Vincennes Commercial Gazette*, July 2, 1877.
5. Notes from "Pioneer Bishops of Indiana," by Rose Dawson Schultheis, 1950. The Saint-Palais File, S.M.W.A.
6. New York *Freeman's Journal and Catholic Register*, July 7, 1877.
7. Canon Caesar Sambucetti à Audran, August 17, 1877, NDUA.
8. Sister Carol Schroeder, *Catholic Church*, etc., p. 202.
9. Rev. J. Benoit to Sister Euphrasie Hinkle, December 29, 1875.
10. December 15, 1874.
11. A Mère Saint Charles, 1 juin, 1849. S.M.W.A.
12. Later Mrs. Matthew Burke, mother of Sister Mary Viola Burke.
13. December 18, 1877.
14. Sister Mary Joseph to Sister Mary Theodore, October 9, 1877, No. 196.
15. Alerding, *The Diocese of Vincennes*, p. 216.
16. Rev. R. E. McNamara, *The American College in Rome*, 1855-1955 (Rochester, N.Y.: Christopher Press, 1956), P. 236.
17. May 26, 1878.
18. Clipping File, "Chatard," S.M.W.A.
19. Rev. John H. Lamott, *History of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, 1821-1921* (Cincinnati: Pustet, 1921), p. 94.
20. Important Events, 1840-1880, pp. 238-240.
21. Memoirs of Sister Celestine Bloomer. Typescript. S.M.W.A.
22. Important Events, 1840-1880, p. 240.
23. *Yearbook of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis*, 1976, p. 69.

CHAPTER XVII

New Schools in Indiana, Michigan, and Illinois. Death of Sister Basilide

Columbus Again. St. Joseph Academy, Evansville; East Saginaw, Michigan; Galesburg, Lockport, St. Augustine, Illinois

St. Bartholomew parish, Columbus, was one of several mission stations attended from Edinburg, Indiana. A school opened there in 1855 by Mother Theodore was closed in 1861 to provide nurses for the Military Hospital. Cannelton, Indiana, was likewise closed, and the reopening of both reserved to the future.

In 1868, Reverend Victor A. Schnell, newly-ordained, was appointed resident pastor of Columbus. By 1875 he felt that the school might safely be reopened since his congregation had doubled, and now numbered seventy-five families. The people took a deep pride in their parish, even though they still had to share their pastor with Edinburg and another small mission. Plans were made for the erection of a two-story brick schoolhouse near the church.

In accepting the mission, Mother Mary Ephrem stated that the Sisters would furnish bed and table linen, towels, and would help with the house furnishings as was customary in opening a new mission. The matter of tuition was to be regulated later, as the Sisters would take chances on charging according to the subjects the child pursued.¹

On August 21, 1878, Mother Mary Ephrem installed the Sisters, four in number, in the plain but comfortable convent and school. The pastor and people welcomed them, and all augured well for the future. Sister Gertrude Sherlock was named superior, and had with her Sister Rosina Baumert, Sister Bernadette Myers, and Sister Mary Euphemia Morris. Father Schnell wrote to Mother Mary Ephrem shortly after the opening of school: "Thank you for the Sisters you sent. With them the school will be a success."² At Christmas time he wrote again, explaining that he could say only one Mass at Columbus on that day, as he had the other stations to visit, and then added:

The children entered into the spirit of the holy day and seemed very happy. I doubt not that we have all taken "the infection," if

I may use that term, from them. The Sisters are truly beloved by the children, and no less honored and respected by the parents. Our school is a visible blessing to our congregation. I doubt very much that you could have made a better selection of Sisters.

Father Schnell included in this letter his kindest regards to Sister Maurice, calling himself "her adopted brother," in alluding to the fact that they shared the same family name.

Later letters showed continued good reports of the school and the Sisters' work, and complimentary remarks on Sister Gertrude's interest:

Sister Rosina's boys are doing well. Sister Gertrude has done oceans of good since she came to Columbus by her visits to the sick, both Catholic and Protestant, and I am exceedingly grateful for the assistance she has afforded me in this respect and in other ways.³

Sister Gertrude Sherlock was an unusual person, certainly not at all standardized. In every school where she taught, she was always the person who made contact with the poor and sick of the neighborhood. Sister Domitilla Tehan, who was at Columbus with her in 1880, thought at first that she could not understand her Superior whom she deemed eccentric; but as she grew to know her, she realized the depth of her spirituality and the wide charity that Sister Gertrude always exercised.⁴

Opening of St. Joseph Academy, Evansville

Reverend Julius Duddenhausen of Evansville, Indiana, urged Mother Mary Ephrem to purchase property near Holy Trinity Church. The Sisters of Providence had been teaching in Evansville for twenty-five years, but as yet did not own a foot of land there. The houses designated for purchase had been occupied by undesirable persons, and their proximity to the church was a source of scandal. Mother Mary Ephrem felt constrained to buy the property and the Council agreed that she should do so. The full burden of payment rested on the Community since the pastor of Holy Trinity Church was heavily in debt. He promised to borrow money at seven per cent and to lend without interest whatever he could secure in his own name.⁵ The financial arrangements were placed in his hands even though the Sisters had had their fill of borrowing money. The price paid was \$8,329.00 including

the thousand dollars lent by the pastor without interest. After the negotiations were completed and the property bought, the houses on it were partly demolished and remodeled to make a satisfactory convent and academy. Located at 313 Division Street, the new St. Joseph Academy began its existence.

On the feast of St. Anne, July 26, 1878, the statue of St. Joseph, gift of Mrs. R. Fergus, was placed in front of the Academy. Mr. Joseph Reitz contributed to the school fund and the parish had a special supper as a school benefit. The Sisters took possession of the house on the feast of Our Lady of the Snow, August 5, 1878. All the Sisters received Holy Communion, and after Mass carried the statue of the Blessed Virgin in procession to their chapel. They then recited the Litany of Loretto, and five times the Our Father and the Hail Mary. On August 20, the house was solemnly blessed by Right Reverend Francis Silas Chatard, Bishop of Vincennes, assisted by the pastor, Reverend J. J. Duddenhausen, and the clergy of the city and vicinity. This coincidence of the first visit of Bishop Chatard to Evansville and the blessing of the Academy took on an impressive solemnity. The various societies of several Catholic churches of the city escorted the Bishop to Holy Trinity Church where he delivered an eloquent sermon on education, followed by Benediction. The Bishop in his sermon spoke of the advantages of high school work, stressing the practical as well as the liberal arts. He even emphasized giving special attention to needlework and music besides the regular high school courses. Sister Scholastica Recker was superior; Sister Mary Angèle O'Donald and Sister Agatha Buchanan were class teachers; and Sister Mary Borgia Larkin, the music teacher. The school grew rapidly and by 1881 there were thirty-nine in the high school and eight graduates. Mother Mary Ephrem, Sister Basilide, Sister Mary Ambrose, the Secretary, and Sister Euphrasie, superior of St. Rose Academy, Vincennes, Indiana, attended the opening. Mother and the three Sisters planned to return home on the same train with Bishop Chatard. At Vincennes, Sister Basilide was taken ill and the Bishop advised that she remain at Vincennes instead of trying to continue. Mother and Sister Mary Ambrose went on to St. Mary's, leaving Sister Basilide with Sister Euphrasie. The next day at St. Rose Academy, the sick Sister had a severe stroke of paralysis which brought her to the point of death. She received the last Sacraments and was attended by Father Merz. A few days later she recovered sufficiently to be moved to St. Mary's. When

the train reached Terre Haute, she had to be conveyed by chair to the carriage. She lingered in the Infirmary until October 11, when a second stroke deprived her of the power of speech. She died about two o'clock in the afternoon on October 13, 1878. Father Chassé was present and gave her the final absolution.

Sister Basilide, who figured largely in the first volume of our history, was a typical French woman — strong, cheerful, attractive, and amiable. She recalled with joy the days of her novitiate at Ruillé and spoke often of Father Dujarié who loved to hear his little novice, sixteen years old, read in her firm and interesting way. She taught in Brittany and in the north of France, and while in Brittany made the acquaintance of Father Corbe who was then tutoring. She frequently heard the old women who sat knitting in their door yards on summer evenings, say to one another, "Here is the little priest of Madame de Langlé. Send the children to ask his blessing." Father Corbe was always greatly amused when Sister Basilide told this story as his was an almost herculean frame.

Sister Basilide was named at the last minute to replace Sister St. Dominic on the mission band to America. She had not volunteered, but she accepted the obedience. During Mother Theodore's trip to France in 1843, Sister Basilide was charged with the temporal affairs of the Community and the governing of the Academy, as she had a pronounced tact for business. Unfortunately, her amiability had also its defects, and she became flattered by the attention of Bishop de la Hailandière who wished her to supersede Mother Theodore as Superior. Her inability to be unpleasant to anyone caused this situation to become very painful to both Mother Theodore and Sister Basilide, but Mother Theodore held no feeling against her as she knew Sister Basilide's failings as well as her virtues.⁶

Sister Basilide had been a member of the Council, but Bishop de la Hailandière in 1844 directed his anger against her and insisted that she be removed from the Council. Not until 1856 was she elected Econome, a position which she held for twenty-one years more. Her death was the fourth death among the original six French Sisters. Mother Theodore, Sister St. Liguori, and Sister St. Vincent preceded her in death, leaving only Sister Mary Xavier and Sister Olympiade still surviving.

Father Chassé sang the Requiem High Mass and Father Bessonies conducted the funeral service. The chapel was crowded because many

of Sister Basilide's friends came to the funeral, and many of the workmen attended.

In late September, 1878, the seminarian, Michael Guthneck, was ordained at Greensburg, Indiana, where Bishop Chatard was confirming. His first Mass was celebrated in his own town, Sainte Marie, Illinois, and his second at St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Father Michael felt much at home in the latter place as he had spent summers there as a seminarian, and he had several relatives among the Sisters. After the Mass, a votive one in honor of the Holy Spirit, Mother Mary Ephrem presented him with a precious remembrance, Father Corbe's chalice.⁷

Bishop Chatard's First Official Visit to Saint Mary's

Bishop Chatard announced his coming for his first visit of inspection. He came on October 9, 1878, and spent the evening recreation at Providence. The next day he said the Community Mass and then visited the sick in the infirmary. He made a thorough inspection of the buildings and had a visit with the postulants. At eleven o'clock, he visited the Institute. Miss Anna Bell made a little complimentary address and the Bishop answered appropriately. He seemed to be very pleased with the visit. This was the first homelike meeting, one might say, of the Sisters with the Bishop. The Pastoral had been read to them on May 26 and from its gentle tone and its statement of his theological and educational principles, the Sisters were prepared for the learned prelate who had been given them.

On December 16, His Lordship announced himself again. He came to examine the classes at the Academy. Unfortunately, the Bishop could not give the permission asked of him at this time — Midnight Mass on Christmas — as celebration of Midnight Mass was restricted temporarily by the Holy See, and therefore the first Christmas Mass of 1878 was said at five in the morning, followed by two other Masses.

January 28 brought the Bishop again. He was invited to come for his feast, that of St. Francis de Sales, the next day. Sister Mary Joseph wrote to Sister Euphrasie:

“My head will be turned,” said Father Bishop who was here for his feastday and greatly pleased. The music was very good and there were recitations by Sister Basilissa and Sister Mary Theodosia. The Bishop also told Father Chassé how pleased he and Bishop Spalding had been with St. Rose Academy.⁸

The program brought on the scene as performers two Sisters who were afterwards to figure very largely in the educational development of the Community — Sister Basilissa Heiner, who was for many years the Supervisor of Schools, and Sister Mary Theodosia Mug, long identified with the musical and historical productions of the Community.

The Bishop's visits to St. Mary's seemed to fall into a regular pattern. Whenever he came, there was always an examination of the classes in the novitiate and in the Academy. In addition, he offered an opportunity to the Sisters to consult him if any cared to do so. There was no set time for his coming, apart from the religious functions of the Community and his feast, but he came very frequently, much more so than did Bishop de Saint-Palais.

Sister Ann Cecilia Buell, who was superior of the Academy in 1879, found herself unable at times to carry out some of her pet plans because the Bishop seemed to take over the educational interests of the school. She must have made mention of this one time to Mother Mary Cecilia to whom she wrote frequently. Mother Mary Cecilia's advice, naturally, was to accept all the suggestions which the Bishop offered out of due regard for his greater experience. There is no record of Sister Ann Cecilia's views, and no contemporary of hers in the teaching field is alive to be questioned. Those Sisters who knew Sister Ann Cecilia in her later years thought of her as one who had what might be called "finishing school" ideas. The Bishop, on the other hand, thought that a more robust education in philosophy, Latin, and the sciences available at that time, would be better. It would fit young women whose possible future was to marry, to meet their husbands on an intellectual plane. Both ideas of education were happily combined in the curriculum. The celebration of the Bishop's feast became an annual event of great importance, and continued with few interruptions during the course of the years.

Many requests had come in for Sisters to open schools. Unfortunately they could not be granted at once as the Community had suffered very much from illness and from the loss of valuable members. Sister Mary Liguori Smith, second assistant in the Council, had been in failing health the year before and had gone to Good Samaritan Hospital, Cincinnati, for consultation with physicians there. They gave her a very short time to live — not more than six months — but her health seemed to improve somewhat and she lived until December 16, 1878. She was the ward of Mr. John Roche of Huntington, who was famil-

iarly known to the Community as "Uncle John." Sister Mary Liguori had been in charge of the Academy and was very gifted. Her death was a great loss.

About the same time, Sister Mary Celestia Kennedy, who was an older Sister and a very valuable one, died also. Sister Mary Basile O'Donnell, who had previously served as Secretary in the Community, died also that autumn; and so Mother Mary Ephrem felt she could not open any missions until August, 1879. Sister Mary Joseph, whose health was never strong, became very ill with erysipelas and was for a number of weeks unable to be of assistance to Mother Mary Ephrem. Within a few months, the Council met and elected Sister Mary Theodore LeTouzé, Mother Theodore's niece, to fill Sister Mary Liguori's place. The Bishop confirmed the choice, and on April 29, 1879, Sister Mary Theodore made the promise of fidelity in the presence of the Bishop and the whole Community.

More Schools in Michigan

From the time the Sisters had opened St. Andrew's School in Saginaw, Michigan, they had received many requests: from Alpena, Lansing, Bay City, Battle Creek, Adrian, and some little towns, but they could not open schools in any of them. The one mission the Sisters felt they could take was at East Saginaw where Father Francis Van der Bom was pastor. He maintained that Saginaw City and East Saginaw were really one with only the river between them, and he felt his congregation should have the benefit of the Sisters of Providence. It was decided that he would be given Sisters, but not immediately.

Saint Joseph Academy, Galesburg

Bishop Chatard, very much imbued with the Roman spirit of spreading the faith, was never hard to approach on the subject of opening missions. Father Joseph Costa of the Rosminian Fathers, pastor at St. Patrick's, Galesburg, had come to Galesburg in 1877 at the request of the Right Rev. John L. Spalding, the first Bishop of Peoria. Father Costa at once turned his efforts toward building parochial schools, and in 1878 he sponsored the erection of St. Joseph Academy, which he asked the Sisters of Providence to staff. There was not time to build a convent for the Sisters, and consequently, a cottage had to be provided for them near the school.

Immediately after August 15, 1879, nine Sisters were named for Galesburg. On August 18, Sister Mary Matthew Meredith, Sister Mary Vincent O'Leary, and Sister Marietta Conway started for their new mission to make preparations for the opening of school. Fortunately all the Sisters did not go. The first three found that the people who were living in the rented cottage were not ready to vacate it. The Sisters would have to live in some of the schoolrooms. Mrs. Dornon, one of the parishioners, treated them with the greatest kindness and offered hospitality, but since this good woman had other boarders in the house, it was not possible for the Sisters to make their home there. Sister Mary Matthew went to St. Mary's to consult about the matter. The Superiors at St. Mary's felt that the Sisters should not live in the school building and authorized Sister Mary Matthew to rent another house until the cottage could be vacated. Sister St. Augustine Roche returned with Sister Mary Matthew and when they reached Galesburg they learned that the two Sisters who had remained there had found more private accommodations, having been made welcome by Mr. and Mrs. John Hickey. Fortunately, the Sisters did not have to be an encumbrance, so to say, on the Hickey family too long because the cottage was vacated within a few days, Mr. Hickey accelerating the work by giving the tenants twenty-five dollars to move sooner. The other five Sisters came from St. Mary's and on September 8, 1879, school was opened with two hundred ninety-five children on the first day. The cottage in which the Sisters resided was found to be too small. Permission was given by Mother Mary Ephrem to Sister Mary Matthew to put up an addition to the cottage, the expense to be defrayed by the Sisters of Providence.

The first Catholic Commencement which Galesburg had ever witnessed took place at St. Joseph Academy in June, 1881. Three girls received diplomas. One of these young women, Mary Slattery, impressed Mother Mary Ephrem very favorably, but to Mother's suggestion that Mary might wish to become a Sister, the answer came that although she was much inclined to the religious life, Mary did not feel her health was robust enough. The visit terminated in a mutual promise of a novena to know God's Will. At its termination the young girl's uncertainty was removed. She entered the novitiate, assuming the name, Sister Mary Raphael, and eventually became the seventh Superior-General (1926-38), dying in her seventy-seventh year in 1940. The school continued to be a very promising one and the Sisters were happy that Father Costa was perfectly satisfied; Bishop Spalding,

too, felt that there was a prospect of the establishment's becoming a flourishing boarding school.⁹

Saint Joseph School, Indianapolis

Although requests for Sisters were coming in from places outside the state, Mother Mary Ephrem wished to do what she could for new schools in Indiana. Further help was needed in Indianapolis where St. Joseph's parish was increasing rapidly. St. Joseph's parish had been organized in 1873 by the Reverend Joseph Petit. Looking to the future, he erected a two-story building which was to be church, school, and rectory. A change of pastors then interrupted the plans. Bishop de Saint-Palais added a three-story structure to the original building and intended it to be a diocesan seminary under the patronage of St. Joseph. After one year, the seminary closed, possibly from the financial pressures of 1873.¹⁰ Therefore, the old seminary was adapted for the Sisters' convent and school.

Interestingly enough, the site of the above-mentioned building was a portion of the Fletcher property on East and Vermont Streets that Mother Anastasie had bought on which to build a hospital. Later, under the changing circumstances and financial troubles, they had sold the entire property to the Little Sisters of the Poor. The Little Sisters, in their turn, had sold a portion to Bishop de Saint-Palais for five thousand dollars, and on this land he erected the seminary.¹¹

From 1874 to 1877, the children were taught by lay teachers, among them Mr. P. Jennings, the Misses O'Connell, and Mrs. P. H. McNelis. In 1877, Sister Mary Eloi Finnin walked daily from St. John's to St. Joseph's, bringing a cold lunch with her. In 1879, Sister Doloretta McGuinea joined her, both still living at St. John's.

Shortly after 1879, Bishop Chatard wished to convert the abandoned seminary into a hospital. He gave permission to the pastor, Reverend Herman Alerding,¹² to build a new church in some other location, and refunded two thousand dollars which the parish had spent on the old building.¹³

The project of the hospital was immediately planned by the clergy. Because of the notable success of the Military Hospital during the Civil War, Mother Mary Ephrem was approached by the Bishop on the matter. Many of the Sisters of Providence felt that the Community ought to accept the hospital, as at that time, hospital work was one of the works specified in the Rule. But by 1880, Mother Mary Ephrem

had promised to take Galesburg and Lockport, Illinois, and did not have enough Sisters to staff the hospital unless she abandoned one of the places she had engaged to take. She wrote to Sister Mary Ambrose, then Secretary, that her refusal was due not to fear of failure (referring to the Providence Hospital episode), but to a want of personnel to carry on the work.¹⁴ Fortunately, there was no need to refuse the hospital as the Bishop was able to secure the Sisters of Charity of Emmitsburg, who opened St. Joseph's Infirmary in 1881. These Sisters cared for the poor and destitute as well as those able to pay, and hoped to move the hospital farther away from the city within a few years.¹⁵

Port Huron, Michigan

Sacred Heart Academy and St. Stephen's parochial school, Port Huron, Michigan, were begun in August, 1880, under Sister Mary Cyril Kilroy, superior, and nine other Sisters, three of whom were novices. They were welcomed on their arrival by Reverend Edward Van Lauwe, and members of the parish, so runs the formal account of the opening; but the facts were narrated by Sister Mary Theodosia in a letter to her Novice Mistress:

We missed connections at Danville, Illinois, with the Toledo train, and were delayed from 1:25 p.m. to 7:20 a.m. We arrived in Toledo at 5:20 p.m., in Detroit at 8:00 p.m., and at Port Huron at 1:10 a.m. Since there was no one to meet us, we remained in the station till 7:00 a.m., until Father Van Lauwe came.

We aroused some attention in the station. We overheard comments as to which Sister was the prettiest, the final decision being the one on the end of the bench. As we were seated on two benches, each one having two ends, it was impossible for us to settle this question, only to remain as if we heard nothing.¹⁶

Only the absolute needs of the Sisters were met in the furnishing of the convent, although it had been stipulated that the convent would be ready for the Sisters. There were no cupboards, no shelves available in the house. Later on some of the Catholic gentlemen gave the Sisters money to buy furniture. The house had been lent to the parish rent-free for ten years by Mrs. Roberts, its owner, grandmother of Sister Madeline Anger and Sister Mary Alma Ryan. The two-story brick school was a real joy, equipped with everything needed for the three hundred seventy-five children who enrolled the first year. There was a

demand for music and painting, and Father Van Lauwe and the Sisters felt that success was assured.

There was a loneliness about the location. The young Sisters especially were aware of this. Sister Mary Theodosia continued in her letter: "It is very lonely here. We are four miles from the Canadian border, and it is so quiet at night that we can hear the town clock strike the hour in Sarnia, a town on the other shore."

The yearly salary for each teacher was two hundred dollars. The music and painting classes had an extra charge, but the Sister who taught these classes did not receive a salary; she depended on the income from her pupils. The group of Sisters also included a cook and housekeeper. The people of the parish were all hard-working, earnest Catholics, but money was scarce. When making the contract for the opening of the school, Father Van Lauwe asked if entertainments could be given by the children and the proceeds applied to the Sisters' salaries, but Mother Mary Ephrem was unwilling to do this. She did not wish any time taken from the school hours for preparation for programs; but she did give permission that the proceeds from the exhibition at the close of the school year would be credited against the salaries. Later Mother agreed to a salary of one hundred dollars a year, and railway expenses for the Sisters in the parish school. Although she needed money badly, Mother Mary Ephrem did not want to have the money question hinder good that might be done.

Lockport, Illinois

Mother Mary Ephrem turned her attention now to Bishop John Lancaster Spalding's invitation to open a second school in Illinois, at Lockport. Sister Euphrasie Hinkle, the second assistant, had visited there the spring previous and had made tentative arrangements, which were later confirmed by Mother Mary Ephrem and the Council. Sister Ambrosia Bedel, accompanied by six Sisters, commenced the mission on August 18, 1881.

There had never been any religious teachers in Lockport, and the people had some doubt that the school would have any permanency there since Lockport was only thirty-two miles from Chicago. The pastor, Reverend J.J. McGovern, D.D., encouraged the Sisters, and aroused the interest of the people. Before very long the school was accepted as a permanent foundation. Dr. McGovern vacated his resi-

dence and made it a convent for the Sisters. Before very long the diffidence of the parishioners disappeared, and the Protestants of the vicinity showed no bigotry whatever. On the contrary, many of them expressed their appreciation of the good work done in the school.¹⁸

St. Augustine, Illinois

Through the interest of Sister Mary Matthew, the superior at St. Joseph, Galesburg, Mother Mary Ephrem's attention was drawn to the little town of St. Augustine, Illinois, sixteen miles south of Galesburg. There had not been a Catholic school in the little town and the superior, Sister Mary Carmel O'Farrell, and her two companions, Sister Mary Eugene Queeney and Sister Joseph Clare Bushna, were welcomed most heartily on August 30, 1882. The pastor, Reverend F. Fallihee, did all that he could for them, even turning his residence over to them as a convent. The spiritual privations were very great, and the Sisters doubted the permanency of the mission. However, a change was made for the better and, temporarily, all looked for favorable results; but the isolated location of the school and the hardships which came through a change of pastors, made it advisable to relinquish the school in July, 1886.

A group of Sisters, visiting St. Augustine from Galesburg in 1962, found behind the altar of the church, a bookcase with books marked "Parochial School." There were also three bound volumes of the AVE MARIA magazine, dated 1884, 1890, and 1891, but nothing else.

The congregation had been made up of Irish families that came in a colony from Maryland to Kentucky and thence to St. Augustine. The tombstones in the cemetery carry not only the names of the deceased but also the birthplace of each one in Ireland.¹⁹ The Community never had any subjects from St. Augustine, as the school had so short a lifetime. There is no school there at present, but the pastor has three missions in addition to care for.

NOTES — CHAPTER XVII

1. Mother Mary Ephrem to Father Schnell, June 3, 1878.
2. Father Schnell to Mother Mary Ephrem, October 1, 1878.
3. *Ibid.*, October 22, 1880.
4. Reminiscences of Sister Domitilla as narrated to Sister Agnes Clare Cassidy, niece of Sister Gertrude Sherlock. Typescript. S.M.W.A.

5. Important Events, 1840-1880, July 27, 1877, p. 280.
6. Necrology, October 13, 1878.
7. Community Diary, October 9, 1878. The chalice was returned to St. Mary's after Father Guthneck's death in 1922, according to his last Will.
8. February 8, 1879.
9. Book of Foundations, p. 45.
10. Alerding, *History . . . Vincennes*, pp. 434-435.
11. See **Chapter XIII**, p. 218.
12. Afterwards Bishop of Fort Wayne (1900-1924).
13. Alerding, p. 346.
14. Mother Mary Ephrem to Sister Mary Ambrose, December 12, 1880.
15. Sulgrove, *History of Indianapolis*, p. 409.
16. Sister Mary Theodosia to Sister Mary Cleophas, August 21, 1880.
17. Mother Mary Ephrem to Reverend E. Van Lauwe, December 27, 1879.
18. Book of the Foundations, "Port Huron, Michigan," p. 46.
19. Letter of Sister Theresa Rose Butts, S.P., July 19, 1962. S.M.W.A.

CHAPTER XVIII

The Novitiate of 1880-1902. The Death of Sister Mary Joseph

Accidental Deaths. St. Joseph's, Indianapolis. Land Purchases

The duties of the chaplaincy of the convent and the care of the village church were concentrated in one priest for more than twenty years, during which Father Corbe held the two posts. In 1865 Father Corbe asked for a division of duties, retaining the chaplaincy by preference. The Benedictine Fathers from Terre Haute were assigned to the village church, and their names appear with regularity on the parish records. Father John B. Chassé succeeded Father Corbe as chaplain. The post was not considered a hard one and therefore not too heavy for a priest in advancing years. In September, 1879, Father Chassé died. If anyone could have taken Father Corbe's place with satisfaction, it was surely he. The Sisters venerated him for his own goodness and for the fact that he was the priest who, conversing with Pius IX, first learned of the appointment of a successor to Bishop de la Hailanière.¹ This good news sent at once to Reverend J.B. Bellier, the Eudist Father in Vincennes, brought the first ray of hope to Mother Theodore prostrate with illness, and under the heavy displeasure of Bishop de la Hailanière.

But those days were past now. Bishop Chatard invited Father Julian Benoit, the great and good friend of the Sisters, to come from Fort Wayne and make a "long visit" at St. Mary's. Bishop Chatard had many adjustments to take care of and welcomed someone who would fill the post of chaplain until he could make a permanent appointment. On November 3, 1879, Reverend Augustine Riehle was appointed pastor of the village, but the halcyon time at the convent was drawing to a close. Bishop Dwenger recalled Father Benoit; in fact, he sent Father Henry Brammer down from Fort Wayne to escort the much needed Vicar-General back to his waiting post. Thereupon Bishop Chatard appointed Reverend John B. Guéguen to be chaplain at the convent.²

One thing that could not be delayed longer, was the provision for living quarters for the novices and postulants separate from the Sisters. A common dining-room could be used by the whole Community as

silence was ordinarily observed at all meals. The possibility of having enough room for all was most inviting in view of the forty years of makeshift arrangements. The custom of sending the novices on mission during the year was a general practice; so that only during the summer when they were at St. Mary's was there a congestion. However, it was necessary to meet the canonical requirement of separation of novices from the professed Sisters.

Bishop Chatard was thoroughly in touch with the increased activity of the bishops of the country for the establishment of parochial schools. The corollary, the adequate preparation of teachers, caused him to enter very heartily into the discussion of plans for summer work for the Sisters.³ Eight of the mission Sisters arrived at the end of June. Plans to deal with the educational ideal were deferred until after the Community election which was scheduled for August 6, 1880. There were some changes in the Council because of the need of replacements. Mother Mary Ephrem was elected for a third triennial term; Sister Mary Joseph, First Assistant; Sister Euphrasie Hinkle, Second Assistant; Sister Mary Bernard Buchanan, Econome; Sister Mary Cleophas, Mistress of Novices; and Sister Mary Ambrose, Secretary.

The idea of bringing home the Sisters for study in the summer fitted in very well with the need of a new building. The novitiate was increasing and the approach of the hoped-for time of the approval of the Rules required the above-mentioned separation between the Community and the Novitiate. In 1840 when Mother Theodore arrived at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, she found four prospective postulants awaiting her. The six Sisters who had come from France and the four postulants were housed in the old Thralls' house, one room of which and a loft had been arranged as the Sisters' quarters. In December, 1840, the Thralls family vacated the house, and the Sisters took possession of it. The smallness of the house made it impossible to do much about providing separate quarters for the novitiate.

In December, 1841, Mother Theodore enlarged the Thralls' house by building two wooden structures, one on each side of the house. Some accommodation was then made here for novices, but there was as yet no separate building.

The new motherhouse erected by Mother Theodore in 1853 provided on the second floor an office and bedroom for the Mistress of Novices, and a study room; and on the third floor, dormitory accommodations for the novices.

During the Civil War years, Mother Mary Cecilia built on the east side of Providence a two-story wing which provided kitchen, scullery, pantries, men's refectory, and Econome's office on the first floor. The second story was devoted to the novitiate — study and service room in the north end; in the south end were the office of the Mistress of Novices, her bedroom, and a large room used as dormitory.

During her administration, Mother Anastasie (1868-74) had been very anxious to build a new novitiate and had hoped to receive a donation from Mr. Chauncey Rose for this purpose, but Mr. Rose was interested only in humanitarian and benevolent projects and not in religious establishments properly so-called, so that he gave no contribution. The disastrous effects of the panic of 1873 and the following money shortage made it impossible to do anything further on the project of a new novitiate until 1880.

On September 22, 1880, the Particular Council discussed the matter of building a temporary one-story frame wing, providing classrooms but not sleeping apartments. This plan was not approved, and members of the General Council were written to with the suggestion that a three-story brick building be erected as a novitiate. Estimates had been secured as to the cost of the building and the Cummings Company of Terre Haute quoted seven thousand five hundred dollars as their bid. The General Council approved this plan and the digging of the foundation for the new novitiate was begun on September 29, 1880. Work continued on the novitiate until December 6, 1880, when the severe weather stopped it. When the construction was resumed in the spring, the progress was disappointingly slow, but by July, 1881, the building was ready for occupancy.

On Commencement Day, June 28, 1881, twenty-seven priests attended the exercises and many of them stayed overnight. They were accommodated in the still vacant novitiate building. Early in July, the pianos and postulants' clothes-cupboards were installed, and a fine bookcase which had been purchased for the Academy in Madison was placed in the study hall.

The outside of the building was plain and austere. The inside was bright with plastered walls and light oak stairs. A narrow hall ran the length of the building on each floor. On the first floor was a long recreation room furnished with high-backed yellow benches along the sides, and at one end, a small table and chair for the Mistress. On the

same floor were music rooms and an oratory of the Holy Face. The altar for the oratory was built by Mr. Fuller of Terre Haute.

The second floor had a study hall with old-fashioned double desks, some of which are now in the museum, several classrooms, an office and sleeping apartment for the Mistress. The third floor was devoted to a long dormitory, equipped with narrow wooden beds, separated by muslin curtains; also lavatory and locker accommodations.⁴

The contentment at the idea of having at last drawn up a satisfactory plan for the much-needed building was manifestly shared by both designers and builders. When the designs were complete, one young man was invited to examine the plans. He was a rising young carpenter and builder, a Mr. George Wernsing, of Indianapolis. He began to show signs of concern while studying the material. Finally, with the diffidence of one offering his views to a group more experienced than himself, he said, "The plans are very fine, and cover all but one thing. I don't see how the novices can get from one floor to another. I see no indication of a stairway." The architect, chagrined, but open to suggestions, had a narrow stairway built in to connect the floors. This anecdote was related by the late Sister Helene Wernsing to a few Sisters at recreation. She rejoiced in her father's acuteness in noting the omission.

On July 11, 1881, a temporary chapel was set up in the north recreation room of the Institute for the novices and postulants, while the Sisters remained in the church for spiritual exercises. On August 8, to draw the blessing of God on the new building, Mass was said in the novitiate oratory for the first time by Father Guéguen.

This novitiate, completed in 1881, was located north and slightly west of Providence, farther north than the site of its successor, the 1902-04 building which now forms the northeast wing of Providence. The 1881 structure was connected to Providence by wooden portions of one of the old wings of the Academy of 1846.

Mother Mary Cecilia at the Orphanage

The Obedience List of 1880 showed one significant change. Bishop Dwenger had intimidated that a Superior younger than Mother Mary Cecilia would be needed to meet the increasing expansion of St. Augustine's Academy, Fort Wayne. Sister Mary John Hetfield was appointed Superior there. Mother Mary Cecilia offered her services in

the Indianapolis diocese, since Bishop de Saint-Palais had gone to his reward. Particularly did she desire to be at St. Ann's Asylum with the orphans, and this wish was easily granted. However, the faithful Sister Rose who had always accompanied her remained in Fort Wayne.

Of the twelve Sisters living at the orphanage, several went daily to the makeshift buildings at St. Ann's Parish School. The Sisters had to cross the muddy fields, and in the winter they and the children were poorly protected against the inclement weather.

Saint Joseph's, Indianapolis

Owing to the careful management of Mother Mary Ephrem's administration, the financial affairs of the Community were getting under control. The Superior-General's heart was always in sympathy with the poor and the poor parishes, but she was limited financially in what she could do for them. Reverend Herman J. Alerding, the pastor of St. Joseph's Church, Indianapolis, asked Mother to buy a lot which was offered for sale by Mr. Dorman of Lawrenceburg, Indiana. The lot was very near the church, and by arranging payments on a time basis Mother bought lot No. 14 on West Noble Street in Wishinger's and Piet's subdivision on February 18, 1880, through Michael Cantwell. Mother instructed Mr. Cantwell to put the old buildings which were on the property in condition for a school.⁵ She rented a cottage near there as a residence for the Sisters. The Community did not expect to make any further improvements until much later.

To complete the history of this mission, we go forward to May, 1883, when Father Alerding represented to Mother that the school made a very poor showing in comparison with other schools nearby and that the attendance would suffer. Mother held off as long as she could, but promised to build the next year. Father Alerding, much to Mother's surprise, sent three of the parish trustees to interview her and bring back a positive answer. In case of a refusal, he would buy back the property and give the mission to other Sisters. Mother answered that she would refer the question to the Council to decide. The majority were in favor of building; only two were not in favor. Mother sent an affirmative answer.

A considerable sum of money was needed for the new building. In addition to the cost of the property, an outlay of nearly twenty thousand dollars was necessary for the construction. The work was begun, and in

September, 1883, four Sisters, Sister Mary Eloi Finnin, superior, Sister Mary Ellen Donelan, Sister Ida Donahue, and Sister St. Rose O'Keefe, began teaching the one hundred and eight-five pupils in a two-story brick building erected by the Sisters.

Land Purchases at St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Miscellaneous Items

During the spring of 1879, a neighbor, Mr. Levings, came to inspect an engine which belonged to our farm equipment. Later he came again and offered to sell twenty-eight acres of land for the engine and five hundred and forty dollars in cash.⁶ This offer was accepted. The tract of land involved lay in the vicinity of the present coal mine. Sixty acres of land were purchased from Mrs. Eliza Jane Kelly for fifteen thousand dollars and a mortgage of three hundred dollars on the land.⁷ This acreage lies southeast of the old village road and extends to the Clinton Road.

March, 1880, was a month of events for the peaceful chronicler of everyday life. On March 1, the new postulants who had not yet received their names, left off the green sunbonnets they had worn and were given a white veil for chapel wear. On receiving their names, they assumed the black cap. A white muslin veil was worn in addition to the cap for Mass and the recitation of the Office. The novices wore the white cap like that of the Sisters, but no white veil.

Two Accidental Deaths

Other crosses were to come to the Community in the accidental deaths of two of the Sisters within twelve months, and both happening in Indianapolis. Sister Frances de Chantal Dufficy, mentioned before as conspicuous for her charity before she became a Sister, had been permitted to pursue her charitable work of visiting the poor and sick of the city. She had her own horse and buggy which, however, was also at the service of the convent. She left St. John's to go to the packing house to buy meat, but as she passed the factory, the cattle stampeded across the road, frightening the horse. The buggy was overturned and Sister Frances de Chantal was thrown against a post, fracturing her skull. She never regained consciousness and died the next day.⁸ Her remains were brought to St. Mary's accompanied by Father Bessonies, some of the

Sisters, and friends, some of the Indianapolis gentlemen acting as pallbearers.

At the opening of the following year, another fatal accident occurred in Indianapolis. Sister Mary Assumptiade Conroy was instantly killed when she jumped for safety from a street car. A backing freight train alarmed the passengers and all in the street car were able to reach the ground except Sister Mary Assumptiade, the last to leave the car. She fell across the tracks and fourteen cars passed over her body. Father Bessonies had her remains taken to Saint John's Academy, her mother was notified, and Bishop Chatard decided that the funeral would take place from St. John's and the burial in the Catholic cemetery in Indianapolis.⁹ The extremely cold weather made anything like a return to Saint Mary's out of the question.

The Death of Sister Mary Joseph le Fer de la Motte

A greater loss befell the Community in the death of Sister Mary Joseph who, in spite of the delicacy of her constitution, had worked zealously to conserve the original spirit of the Community. Her influence was a deep personal, and moral one. Never a local superior, but successively mistress of novices and first assistant, she had exerted a powerful influence on the formative years of many of the Sisters.

More than twenty years had passed since the death of Mother Theodore. The solid foundation of faith on which she had built Saint Mary-of-the-Woods had endured, and would endure through the government of successive administrators. It seemed that more than one individual was needed to show forth to the little flock the qualities that Mother Theodore had combined in her own person. The remarkable business acumen of Mother Mary Cecilia was accompanied by a straightforward method of speech. The very rugged lines of her personality made her devoid of flexibility, and thus she found it difficult, sometimes impossible, to consider the suggestions of her Council. Exact and faithful as she was, her example did not have the alluring charm of Mother Theodore's, nor did she have the discerning tact that lightened the crosses of life for her Sisters, nor the motherly heart that anticipated their needs.

Mother Theodore had seen in Sister Mary Joseph, still a novice, the lofty character and ideals she would have desired for her successor, as she indicated in a letter to Mother Mary:

If I only had, as you say, someone to replace me. But there is none, and I do not know where to find one to train her. . . . There is another who is very promising, whose piety is developing and strengthening, and who appears to me to have the germs of those qualities which, if I mistake not, would make an excellent superior. But she is still only a novice and needs much training herself before having to be occupied with others. . . . Moreover, she has natural qualities that give her, imperceptively, the ascendancy over all around her, no one minding it or she herself not appearing to be conscious of it. It is on this dear Sister that I rest my hopes, but they cannot be realized if I die soon. . . . It is Sister Mary Joseph le Fer.¹⁰

A sister of Sister St. Francis Xavier, who was gifted with an ardent temperament and deeply enamored of divine things, Sister Mary Joseph presented a contrast. Younger than her sister by nine years, Sister Mary Joseph possessed a steady, firm character, inclined to personal austerity. Her vocation was one of conviction rather than attraction, and her life resting on the principles of faith, was a sure guide by its example. She exhibited very early a balanced judgment and a deeply apostolic spirit. Her excellent grounding in religion sustained her in her efforts to simplify and make attractive, truths of faith and the principles of the religious life. There was a virility in her guidance, a continual stressing of self-conquest and high motives. Her letters to the novices who were on the missions and to the young professed Sisters who wrote to her are examples of tender solicitude for their temporal and spiritual welfare. All things to all men, she had learned to understand, but not to condone, the failings of the young Sisters and to point out remedies for their mistakes.

She made allowance for the human weaknesses of the postulants who were homesick, as none knew better than she what a pang it was to leave a close-knit family group. One day she heard music coming from the kitchen — a most unusual place and a most unusual sound in mid-morning. On investigating, she found a new postulant playing a frontier melody on an accordion and another postulant teaching a reluctant cat to dance. The Sister cook was conveniently somewhere else at the time. Expecting a rebuke, the postulants were surprised to receive each a large piece of bread with butter; and the cat, released from its bondage, received a saucer of milk. Then the postulants were invited to the office of the Mistress where an explanation made clear to

them the obligation of silence and the duty of attending to employments. The reproof, tempered with kindness, produced results.

The Providence of God had been watching in a singular manner over the Sisters of Providence during the late sixties and early seventies. New and strong vocations came into the novitiate in encouraging numbers. The long roll of postulants during these years included many names well known to the second, third, and even the fourth decades of the twentieth century. The list would be too long to recount them all here, but as the Latin poet once said, in a far different connection, "from one example, learn all!"¹¹ Sister Euphrasie Hinkle, Sister St. Clare Rielag, Sister St. Clement Higgins, Sister Celestine Bloomer, Sister Mary Cyril Kilroy, Sister Mary Maurice Connors, Sister Mary Eugene Queeny, Sister Mary Regis Tiernan, Sister Basilissa Heiner, Sister Mary Kostka Schurger, Sister Mary Boniface Schurger, and three score more.

Fortunate it was for these Sisters that they came under the direction of Sister Mary Joseph at the beginning of their religious lives, and under her successor as Mistress, Sister Mary Cleophas Foley, who had so truly inbibed Mother Theodore's spirit. Ascetic in her inclinations and fervent in prayer, Sister Mary Joseph attracted many to the practice of virtue. Through her instructions to the novices, and through her many letters to the young Sisters on the missions, she kept alive in their hearts the real spirit of their calling. Her direction was simple and sound in all its aspects. The Rule was their guide; they had accepted it, and must try to follow it in spirit and letter. Her constant admonitions were fidelity to prayer, adherence to retreat resolutions, mortifications in little things that cost but which attracted no attention. They were to love the Church, follow the mandates of the Holy See, obey and respect the Pastor, and above all, do all in their power to promote harmony in the convent by the practice of virtue.

Even when Sister Mary Joseph was first assistant, the chronic ill-health of Sister Mary Cleophas often threw the work of the novitiate back on her.¹² This caused no conflict as the method was merely a continuation of her own procedure, so closely had Sister Mary Cleophas followed the pattern shown her.

To Sister Mary Joseph also fell the duty of conducting the "little retreat," held in the summer for the Sisters who had to stay on the missions, sometimes before and sometimes after the annual retreat. Whenever possible, however, the summer housekeepers were recalled

and in a group made the retreat under the Jesuit Fathers Corbett or Coughlin.¹³

She was interested in all the attempts to promote the Faith and kept in touch with the progress of the Church throughout the world. She promoted not only the devotion to the Sacred Heart and the Apostleship of Prayer, but also the Association of the Holy Childhood and work for poor churches. All of these, Sister St. Francis Xavier had promoted, giving generously to new parishes the things the Le Fer family sent for that purpose. The Sisters on the missions were advised to make cinctures, purificators, corporals, in their free time to help the poor missionaries.

Her sister, Mme. Clémentine de la Corbinière, had written the life of Sister Saint Francis Xavier le Fer under the title *Une Femme Apôtre*. Its success in France was very great, and Sister Mary Joseph wanted to secure the services of a good translator to put the book into English. She applied, with Mother Mary Ephrem's permission, to a Sister in Ireland who did translation work very successfully, using as identification, "Translated by a Nun of Kenmare." To Sister Mary Joseph's disappointment, she was notified that the Sister was not available at that time for translation work. Sister Mary Joseph undertook the translation with the help of Sister Euphrasie who assisted her in bringing out the English edition which was published in New York by the Catholic Publications Society in 1882. A similar effort to make Sister St. Francis and her work known was the translation into German by Alice Kuppelweisen, a friend of Sister Maurice.

Sister Mary Joseph's command of English had become very good, and in the main, her English letters show the same elegance of style that characterized her French correspondence. Many of the letters written to Mother Mary at Ruillé in both the administration of Mother Mary Cecilia and of Mother Anastasie were written by Sister Mary Joseph in her own name, but at the Superior-General's request.

From the collection of nearly two hundred and fifty letters written by Sister Mary Joseph to clergy, Sisters, and friends, one often finds a fuller development of events barely noted in the Community annals.

Sister Mary Joseph held in special affection the Sisters who had entered the Community with her. Even in her last days, she celebrated the day of their entrance, October 20, and on that day, Sister Mary Eudoxie Marshall and Sister St. Antoine Herrmann came to Sister Mary Joseph's room to commemorate the twenty-ninth anniversary of

the day. They recalled the kindness of Bishop de Saint Palais in sending word to Mother Theodore to meet them in New York, the reunion with Sister St. Francis Xavier, who instantly asked of the Lord thirty years of service in Indiana for Sister Mary Joseph. That October 20, 1881, closed the twenty-ninth year, but opened for the asked-for thirtieth.

Sister Mary Joseph died on the third Sunday of Advent, December 12, 1881. Sister Mary Cleophas read the Mass prayers with her; and was present at the deathbed, together with many of the Sisters.

Father Guéguen, the chaplain, sang the Requiem Mass, and Bishop Chatard gave the funeral sermon, dwelling upon Sister Mary Joseph's spirit of faith, her purity of intention, her devotedness to the Community, and the great sacrifice she had made in leaving her home and country for a missionary country. His Excellency then pronounced the final absolution and accompanied the funeral procession to the cemetery.¹⁴

The words of the Right Reverend Bishop Chatard quoted in the *Freeman's Journal* sum up the great influence of the Sister:

The name of Sister Mary Joseph will ever be a household word among the Sisters of Providence, and her humble, simple life will be pointed out to young Sisters who follow in her vocation as a pattern — as is already the life of Sister St. Francis — as is the life of Mother Theodore, the venerated Founder of their order in Indiana.

Her devotedness in "transmitting the holy teachings received from . . . Mother Theodore" perpetuated the Foundress's ideals and adapted them to succeeding groups of novices. As first assistant from 1868-81, her scope of action widened, but the Sisters with whom she worked were those who knew and venerated her. The lament in the necrology sums up her highest tribute: "Her death was a great loss to the Community, second only to the death of Mother Theodore."

NOTES — CHAPTER XVIII

1. Brown, *History*, I, 468.
2. Community Diary, December 29, 1879.
3. *Ibid.*, July 19, 1880.
4. Sister Francis Cecile Miller, "Challenge to the Stars," Typescript. S.M.W.A.
5. Alerding, *History . . . Vincennes*, p. 436.
6. Community Diary, August 18, 1879.
7. *Ibid.*, March 13, 1880.

8. Community Diary, February 9, 1891.
9. *Ibid.*, January 4, 1882.
- 10 7 juillet, 1855. S.M.W.A.
11. Virgil, *The Aeneid* in describing the stratagems of the Greeks.
12. Community Diary, January 25, 1873.
13. *Ibid.*, August 19, 1872.
14. *Ibid.*, December 14, 1881.

CHAPTER XIX

Hopes for Approval of the Rule. Mother Euphrasie Elected

Schools: St. Benedict and St. Patrick, Terre Haute; Ypsilanti, Michigan

Bishop Chatard came regularly to Saint Mary-of-the-Woods three times a year to examine the Academy classes and the novitiate. He was always pleased, too, to attend whatever programs were arranged for him and made it a point to come annually for January 29, the feast of St. Francis de Sales, his patron. As rector in Rome, he met with visitors from America who wished to be received by the Holy Father. It is said that the Bishop arranged the presentations of General Grant and General Sherman to Pius IX when the famous military leaders, respectively, visited Rome. The Bishop made many international friendships and he was anxious to have any of his former friends visit Saint Mary-of-the-Woods when they came to greet him in Indianapolis.

Several notable ecclesiastics came at his invitation, among them the Very Reverend Joseph Memarbasci, Patriarchal Vicar of Antioch, and his secretary, Deacon Joseph Schelhot. The reverend gentlemen were collecting funds for the missions in the Holy Land and had met Bishop Chatard at the Propaganda. America was still a missionary country under the care of the Propaganda. They had not intended to collect in Indiana, but the Bishop unhesitatingly invited them to do so in his diocese. The two visitors made an unusual appearance. Father Memarbasci wore a full beard and mustache, and the deacon, a mustache. Old Dennis, the driver of the carriage that went to the station to meet them did not recognize them, and called out to the reception committee of Sisters, "I came to meet two priests, but I see none!" Dennis was quite abashed at his mistake.

The next morning, the Reverend Vicar, attended by his deacon, celebrated Mass in the Syriac Rite.¹ This was probably the first time that any other rite than the Roman was used at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

The Bishop's continued interest showed itself in the sound advice he gave the Community. Several fires, and fire scares, had alarmed the

Sisters, and they continually invoked the protection of Providence. The devastating fire of 1842 had almost wiped out the original Foundation, and had forced Mother Theodore to seek alms in France. During the intervening forty years, lesser fires had broken out, one destroying the Thralls House, "the cradle of the Community," on February 22, 1858. The occasional loss of utility buildings made fire a recurrent hazard. Now very practically, the Bishop recommended that insurance should be taken out on the buildings. The diarist was careful to point out that it was not through distrust, or lack of confidence in Providence, but it was in compliance with the Bishop's recommendation that insurance was taken out. Through Mr. L. C. Hagen, agent in Terre Haute, insurance to the amount of thirty-five thousand dollars was placed on the Academy, twelve thousand dollars on Providence Convent, and three thousand dollars on the new novitiate, for five years at an annual premium of three hundred and seventy-five dollars. Mr. Hagen was later charged with insuring St. Patrick Convent, Terre Haute, at four thousand dollars for five years.²

Death of Bishop de la Hailanière

Word came through Father Audran, relative of Bishop de la Hailanière, of the death of the venerable prelate on May 1, 1882, at his home in Combourg, Brittany. Requiem Mass was offered for the repose of his soul in the little chapel at St. Mary-of-the-Woods. The diary states: "He was the instrument in the hands of God for introducing the Sisters of Providence in America."³

Sister Mary Borromeo Brown, who had the opportunity of making an intensive study of the Bishop's relation to the Community, observed:

Despite the ever-present threat to their permanent establishment in the diocese, and even to their existence as a religious body, Bishop de la Hailanière's influence upon the Community was surprisingly slight in view of lasting effects. For only one major decision was he alone responsible, the location in the forests of Vigo County. No other measure of permanent importance can be attributed to his advice or assistance.⁴

The death of Bishop de la Hailanière removed the last block of opposition to the much-desired Pontifical approval of the Rules of the American foundation. An unguarded statement of Sister Basilide to the

Bishop when she and Sister Mary Joseph visited him in 1866, regarding the purpose of their visit to Ruillé, seemed to have roused him to oppose the approval of the Rules by Rome. When Bishop de Saint-Palais approached the Sacred Congregation of Religious for this approval, he was advised to wait, as serious opposition had been offered by someone who styled himself, "A friend of Bishop Bruté." It was thought best to delay any request until later. After Bishop de la Hailandière's death, action for approval was begun, and the Decree of Praise was given to the Rules on June 3, 1887. The influence of Bishop Chatard counted greatly in offsetting the previous opposition.

A commemorative service for Bishop de la Hailandière was held at St. John's Church, Indianapolis, on June 7, 1882, at which Father Audran preached the discourse printed in the account of the memorial service.⁵

Father Audran then left Vincennes for France to see to the disposition of the Bishop's estate. He learned that it was the Bishop's wish to be buried in the Cathedral of Vincennes, his first and only cathedral. The wooden box arrived in November, and the interment took place the next day, November 22, 1882, no attempt being made to open the heavy box, as Sister Mary Borromeo Brown remarked.⁶

April 16, 1883, brought news of the death of Louis Veuillot, the editor of *L'Univers*, Mother Theodore's good friend. The editor was the strong friend of the Holy Father and supporter of papal power. Conspicuous for his lifelong devotion to the Holy See, he was the target of much criticism, but he remained faithful to the Church.

First Telephone at St. Mary's

The commercial and social advantages of the newly-invented Bell telephone made its use widespread. Invented in 1876, the telephone extended its usefulness through exchanges. The first public exchange, opening this invention to the country, was set up in New Haven, Connecticut, in 1878. Through Mr. W. W. Smith, superintendent of the Indianapolis exchange, and Mr. W. B. Ripley, manager of the Terre Haute office, an instrument was installed in the business office of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods on September 22, 1882. The contract covering its use was for three years at one hundred and twenty dollars a year, payable in advance.

The first Sister to speak over it was Sister Mary Bernard Buchanan,

the economy, who answered the first ring on that day. As the call came during evening recreation, Sister Mary Bernard went to the community room and announced that the telephone call was for Sister Mary Ambrose O'Donald the secretary. To take part in this phenomenal happening, the Council and the Sisters rose as one to go to find out who was calling and what about. The caller was Miss Mattie Mancourt, a former student, who had heard that the Sisters had a telephone installed, and wanted to have a "wire talk" with her friends. Each of those who knew her had a brief exchange of words, and the world-shaking event was over. The telephone seems to have been somewhat temperamental. The repair man was sent for at times, and one heavy snowstorm on February 5, 1883, brought down the wires which had been temporarily attached to the big entrance gate. After April, 1883, permanent attachments were made for the wires.

Saint Benedict's, Terre Haute

This parish, the second oldest in the city, was organized by thirteen families under the care of Reverend Bede Mundweiler, O.S.B., in 1864. A small temporary church was arranged in 1865 and was adequate for the time, but the trustees felt that a school should be provided, and that the parish could support it. The children were attending St. Joseph's school until arrangements could be made for school and convent. Mother Mary Ephrem was happy at the thought of a second convent in Terre Haute, and found the agreement quite satisfactory. The parish provided a furnished dwelling house, and an annual salary of two hundred and fifty dollars each for the teaching Sisters and fifty dollars a year for the one who did the cooking. Discussion of many lesser matters followed. The Sisters agreed to give music lessons without charge to a girl in St. Joseph's school so that she could train the children's choir at St. Benedict's. The Sisters also agreed to teach boys in the lower grades although this was still a deviation from custom. The Sisters appointed for the opening of the school in September, 1881, were Sister Walburga Eger, Sister Mary Bernardine McKenna, and Sister Mary Boniface Cook, "Our Sisters for the German parish in Terre Haute, take possession of their convent. From this date forward, it is a separate mission."⁷

The school progressed very well. A new school building was completed in May, 1888, and dedicated by Bishop Chatard. A steady

increase in faculty kept pace with the larger enrollment. By 1891, eight Sisters were needed, and to meet the needs of a predominantly German parish, most of the Sisters were of German descent.

The Franciscan Fathers, O.F.M. Conv., who had succeeded the Benedictine Fathers in 1872, remained in charge of the parish. In 1898, a new church was built largely from donations from the Hulman estate, but this church burned to the ground in 1930. After the fire, it was rebuilt in the same style, but not in the same magnificence, through generous donations of the parishioners and help from the Hulman estate.

A New Wing at St. Augustine's, Fort Wayne

Needs were multiplying in the schools. Bishop Dwenger of Fort Wayne stressed the cramped conditions of the schoolrooms of St. Augustine Academy. He urged the enlargement of the school, or the building of a south wing which would increase the capacity of the school and convent by one-third. Father Benoit, the Vicar General, knowing the need of the hard-pressed Community, offered Mother Mary Ephrem the five thousand dollars which he had intended to leave the Community in his will, asking only that the Sisters pay him five per cent interest annually during his lifetime. His offer was gratefully accepted. On June 12, 1882, Sister Mary John Hetfield, local superior of St. Augustine's, was instructed to proceed with the building.

St. Patrick's, Terre Haute

In 1881, the Reverend Thomas X. Logan, Pastor of St. Patrick's parish, asked Mother Mary Ephrem to finance a convent and school in his parish. The children of his congregation, located in the eastern part of town, could not attend St. Joseph's school on account of the distance. St. Patrick's parish, readily identified by its patron, was an English-speaking parish. Although the parish was not a wealthy one, the people had a sincere devotion to their faith, and had given generously to the building of a Gothic church adequate for their needs.

Mother Mary Ephrem agreed to open a school and to provide a convent. Ready to her hands was a piece of property adjoining St. Patrick's church grounds. On the lot was a frame meeting-house belonging to the Plymouth Church Company. The place was ideal for a

parish school, although it cost the Sisters thirty-five hundred dollars. The Council felt that it was better to assume the expense rather than have another teaching Community come into Terre Haute "to the very door of our motherhouse."⁸

Accordingly, a letter was sent to the members of the General Council, local superiors of houses having ten Sisters, asking their opinion and advice in the matter. All voiced their approval of the purchase and building, as they generally endorsed all Mother Mary Ephrem's proposals. Negotiations were begun at once with Captain S. H. Potter, treasurer of the Plymouth Church Company. The Sisters preferred to buy the property through Bishop Chatard, and Mother Mary Ephrem furnished him with thirty-five hundred dollars. The Bishop transacted the purchase of the Plymouth Chapel and property and then deeded the property to the Sisters.

Meanwhile, a convent had to be built. Mr. D. A. Bohlen, architect, presented a neat and compact plan, and promised to superintend the building. He contracted with A. Helm and Sons of Indianapolis to build the two-story brick convent, to fit up the Plymouth chapel into school-rooms, to connect it with the convent, and to install the heating equipment. The cost of building and renovation came to seven thousand, seven hundred and ten dollars. Everything was ready for the new school in September, 1882. Sister Mary Edward Michael, Sister Mary Alberta Comer, Sister Gaudentia McNamara, Sister Ann Maurice O'Brien, Sister St. Jerome Boland, Sister Margaret Mary Gorée, Sister Ann Augustine Malloy opened the school. Pupils who could pay were expected to pay the tuition charge, but poor children were never refused. The Sisters received no other recompense in the line of salary or maintenance. The prospects were very good as the attendance during the first year rose to one hundred and forty.

Land Purchase from J. B. Johns

For some years the Community had wanted to buy a small piece of land near the railroad station and adjoining our property on the south-east. It was owned by Mr. J. B. Johns. There was nothing unusual about the projected purchase, but its ownership by the Sisters would make it impossible for undesirable persons to come too close to the Institute. One very practical advantage activated the purchase. The wagon road that in the course of time wandered through the property

had crossed fields in taking the easiest way. The result was a considerable loss of valuable ground, but the meanderings of the wagon road could not be straightened out without passing through Mr. Johns' property. Again the Community proposed buying the fourteen and four-tenths acres at eighty dollars an acre, by providing Mr. Johns with a due bill for the education of his daughters at the Institute until the cost of the land was taken out in tuition. Mr. Johns accepted the arrangement, and in addition had the land surveyed at his own expense as far as the center of the railroad track. He explained that this measure was to secure the property in case the railroad track would ever be moved. This was not a cash transaction, but a due bill was given Mr. Johns for \$1123.20 for tuition as agreed upon.⁹

Mrs. Chatard's Illness and Death

The Sisters coming from Indianapolis brought word that Bishop Chatard's mother had died on January 15, 1883. The respectful and cordial relationship existing between the Community and the Chatard family was shown at seasonal intervals by the exchange of greetings. On the occasion of the golden wedding of Dr. and Mrs. Chatard prayerful reminders of the day had been prepared by Sister Mary Joseph le Fer, and a "Victoria Box" sent to Mrs. Chatard. This gift was a popular adornment in a lady's sewing room. Bishop Chatard, who was with his parents on the occasion, had been delighted with the remembrance and had expressed the appreciation of his parents and the family with his own.¹⁰

Now that the Chatard family was in sorrow, letters from Mother Mary Ephrem and from the Sisters in a letter from Sister Mary Ambrose, brought grateful, though sad, answers from the Bishop and his father. The latter noted Mrs. Chatard's resignation, and her requests for prayers from the various communities in Baltimore for a happy death.¹¹

Heavy Floods on the Ohio River

In early February, 1883, snow and ice brought both beauty and hardship. "The sun is so warm today that many of our lovely ice diamonds are beginning to melt." Sleigh rides for the pupils of the Institute afforded a few days' pleasure, but the delays in trains from the East caused anxiety. All too soon came the announcement that high

water along the Ohio and particularly at Cincinnati was causing hardship to families along the river. "No trains either direction. The railroad track was a miniature ocean. The flood was the greatest overflow of water known in this country."¹²

Collections were taken up in all the churches for flood relief, and the mission at Jeffersonville received gratefully a sack full of clothing for the poor. By February 24, thousands of dollars had been collected, and supplies of clothing furnished.

Bishop Chatard at the suggestion of Mother Mary Ephrem had cancelled the yearly visit for the program given in his honor on January 29. He expected to come about the end of February, but a telephone call from Indianapolis set that aside also. He was suffering from an attack of acute rheumatism, and the doctors recommended a trip to Hot Springs, Arkansas, for treatment. Even then he was still so poorly, that he could not return for the Holy Week services in Indianapolis.

We Erect a New Convent in New Albany

Mother Mary Ephrem had begun her annual visitation in southern Indiana early in February. She returned to St. Mary's on March 17. As a result of her trip, she presented again to the Councilors the idea of doing something to make the convent at New Albany more livable. The old frame building was poor enough when the mission was first opened in 1858, but circumstances did not allow the Sisters to consider anything until 1883. Reverend John B. Kelly, the pastor, had just completed a fine large school, and when he broached the subject of erecting a new convent, she felt that it was only a duty of justice to do it. The Councilors were unanimous in agreeing to the plan. A drawing was made embodying ideas for the convent and sent to Father Kelly with the request that he get estimates on the cost. An exchange of letters followed, and the contract was awarded to Mr. Friend of New Albany who was to furnish the material and build the house at the very reasonable sum of \$4,229.00.¹³

A Hospital for Terre Haute

On May 15, 1883, the public learned the good news that Mr. Herman Hulman had purchased the property formerly known as St. Agnes Hall, a private academy in Terre Haute which had discontinued operations on account of expense. The building and site were presented

to the Franciscan Sisters for a hospital building in memory of Mrs. Hulman who had died but a few weeks before. Thus was verified the old prophecy of Father di Maria, S.J.: "Some day St. Agnes Hall will be in the hands of Catholics."

The Election of 1883

During the first weeks of August, 1883, previous to the coming election, Bishop Chatard conducted his visitation at St. Mary-of-the-Woods. The members of the General Council were arriving, Mother Mary Cecilia among them. As a preliminary to the opening of the Chapter, the councilors were assembled to hear the report of the temporal affairs of the Community. The meeting was held in the secretariat as the parlor or "Mother's office" was occupied by the Bishop during his stay. At a later meeting at which Mother Mary Ephrem was not present, the Bishop announced that it was not his intention to prolong Mother's administration, that her last term was by dispensation, and that the Rule did not provide for a fourth term of three years.

This announcement was a real shock to the Sisters as a fourth term had been given before in Mother Mary Cecilia's case. The Sisters loved Mother Mary Ephrem, and appreciated all she had gone through to save their credit, but they could do or say nothing. The Community was a diocesan community, and could not refuse to follow the Bishop's direction. As was to be expected, the election took a long time. It began at eight-thirty on the morning of the sixth and terminated after twelve o'clock. The results were:

<i>Superior-General</i>	<i>Mother Euphrasie Hinkle</i>
<i>First Assistant</i>	<i>Sister Mary Stanislaus Hayes</i>
<i>Second Assistant</i>	<i>Sister Mary Ursula Fearn</i>
<i>Mistress of Novices</i>	<i>Sister Mary Cleophas Foley</i>
<i>Secretary-Treasurer</i>	<i>Sister Mary Ambrose O'Donald</i>
<i>Econome</i>	<i>Sister Mary Carmel O'Farrell</i>

No matter how hard an administrator tries to carry out her duties, she cannot satisfy everyone. It was rumored among the Sisters at that time, tradition says, that Bishop Chatard had spoken to Mother Mary Ephrem about her adherence to old customs in expecting the Sisters to ask permission before receiving Holy Communion outside of the Communion Days of Rule. Mother began to explain that she was

following the Rule. The Bishop manifested a slight vexation at the reply, but it does not seem possible that such a difference of opinion could have caused the Bishop's announcement. The other reasons he gave are much more plausible. Mother Mary Ephrem had the love and respect of those who labored with her, but some felt that she stressed economy too much, although she tried never to mention money. A deeply spiritual woman, she placed her trust in God, and tried to use every means at hand to promote Catholic education; and to meet the obligations that the events of the preceding years had accumulated. These were not insignificant. The debts of the preceding administration were heavy: the uncompleted financial arrangements in the purchase of the Griswold property, the debts of Providence Hospital which the Bishop's purchase as an orphan asylum still left with overhanging debts. These were steadily dealt with, but the Madison Hotel problem dragged out for years to come. None of these debts had been incurred by Mother Mary Ephrem, but she had achieved surprising success in paying off creditors and at the same time promoting the apostolate of the Sisters. As Bishop Dwenger said of her in a conference to the Sisters of Fort Wayne several years later:

If the Sisters ever forget the great work that Mother Mary Ephrem did for the Community, they will be most ungrateful. When Mother Mary Ephrem became Superior-General, the Sisters would not be credited with even a loaf of bread.¹⁴

Mother Mary Ephrem was anxious to develop parochial schools, to work with poor missions. She urged the Sisters who had time to make altar supplies for the poor missionaries working among the Indians in the western settlements. At the time she was replaced in office, she was only forty-seven years old, and as we may yet see, her years of devotion to the Community in its temporal and spiritual aspects, were far from finished. It is possible that Bishop Chatard anticipated that the lengthening of the Superior-General's term of office from three to six years, as was likely to occur in the privileges granted through the Decree of Praise (now yearly expected), would prolong her duration of administration to fifteen years, a time not usually approved by Canon Law unless in an emergency.

There were many tears shed that day, but no demonstration of resentment or unpleasantness. "Peaceful tears, full of resignation," the diarist notes, After the celebration and complimentary good wishes extended to Mother Euphrasie on the occasion, the Community began

its annual retreat. After the Assumption, Mother Mary Ephrem availed herself of the right to select her mission to readjust her life, and chose St. Patrick's, Terre Haute, in which she had been interested since its beginning.

Ypsilanti, Michigan

The mission of Ypsilanti, Michigan, opened in August, 1883, properly belongs to Mother Mary Ephrem's apostolate, for it was she who approved the formation of the convent early in 1883. School was opened under the care of Sisters Mary Pauline Michaels, Mary Bernardine McKenna, Mary Alberta Comer, Mary Cajetan Foley, Mary Cosmas Otto, and Alice Clare Beatty, the last two na being novices. Sister Mary Stanislaus accompanied them to see that all was well at the installation. The Sisters' dwelling was the personal property of the pastor, Father de Bever, and the new two-story brick school made the Sisters confident that much good could be done there. Sister Mary Cyril, the superior at Port Huron, had made the arrangements with the pastor and had indicated what the Sisters would need. The enrollment was more than one hundred pupils. According to the regulation of the Detroit diocese boys over twelve years of age were not received in the Sisters' schools.

The name of the town had excited some interest as to its origin; but instead of being an Indian name, which might have been supposed, it was really the name of an old-time Greek warrior.

Sister Agnes Therese Smith, the one and only member of the Community from Ypsilanti, has left some details of the place. There were no Sisters in Ypsilanti until 1883, and the children attended the public school, then went on to the State Normal for higher education. The Normal had a high reputation, and anyone who graduated from it never had to take an examination for certification. Some Catholic girls went to the Immaculate Heart Sisters in Monroe, Michigan. As soon as the Sisters of Providence opened their school, our future postulant, Sister Agnes Therese, insisted on attending the school, opposing the wishes of her father, but gaining his consent at last, and later to enter the novitiate.

The Sisters of Providence were withdrawn from Ypsilanti after some thirteen years there. A change of pastors had taken place, and the opinion of the later successors to Father de Bever inclined towards

allowing the children to attend the public school. The Sisters had to withdraw in 1896.

NOTES — CHAPTER XIX

1. Community Diary, February 4, 1882.
2. *Ibid.*, April 17, 1882.
3. *Ibid.*, May 22, 1882.
4. Brown, *History*, I, 482.
5. Alerding, *History of Diocese of Vincennes*, pp. 162-184.
6. Brown, *History*, I, 483.
7. Community Diary, August 19, 1882.
8. Acts of the Council, 1880-1914, p. 1.
9. Important Events, 1880-1914, September 27, 1882.
10. Bishop Chatard to Mother Mary Ephrem, September 8, 1880.
11. Dr. Ferdinand E. Chatard to the Sisters, January 23, 1883.
12. Community Diary, February 20, 1883.
13. Important Events, 1880-1914, p. 20.
14. Sister Anita Cotter, *In God's Acre*, p. 74.

CHAPTER XX

Madison Property Finally Settled. Bishop Chatard Goes to Rome.

New Missions: Lemont and Savanna, Illinois. New Residence for the Chaplain at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

Mother Euphrasie's portrait shows a young and fragile Sister, pleasant and friendly. In this present year (1977) there is no Sister living who has ever seen her, but her memory is kept alive in the memoirs of those who knew her and who perpetuated her personality in the recollections they have given of her charm and graciousness.

The essential facts of her biography are well told in *God's Acre*, a memorial volume dealing with the four Mothers General who had successively followed Mother Theodore. Suffice it to say that Mother Euphrasie was a Southerner, born in Carrollton, Kentucky, September 15, 1846. Her father was Judge George D. Hinkle, and her mother, Lucy Hawkins Hinkle. She was called Anna. Her mother died when she was four years old, leaving also Betty, aged two, and William, aged six. The proper care and education of the children were of great concern to the Judge who had his own legal work to carry on. Finally, to relieve him, his sister, Mrs. John Wright, took the children with her to Indiana. Later, William was sent to a boys' boarding school in Philadelphia, and the two girls to Saint Augustine Academy, Fort Wayne, conducted by the Sisters of Providence.

A strongly prejudiced Methodist, Anna did not like the idea of being in a Catholic school; but, little by little, she modified her attitude so thoroughly that she became a Catholic under the tutelage of Reverend Julian Benoit, the pastor of the Cathedral. Her vocation to the religious life began to develop and on July 14, 1864, she entered the novitiate at St. Mary-of-the-Woods, adopting the name, Sister Euphrasie.

Candid and sincere in her religious life, and as firm in her convictions as she had been in her early prejudices, the young Sister gave no cause for anxiety except the lack of good health. After her noviceship she spent a year at St. John Academy, Indianapolis, where she gained some practice in living mission life, and also benefited by the medical help she needed to build up her constitution. After making her first

vows, she was appointed assistant mistress of novices. In 1874 she was named superior of St. Rose, Vincennes, and in 1880 was elected second assistant to Mother Mary Ephrem, succeeding her as Superior-General in 1883¹.

Charming in disposition, with an inherent southern grace, Mother Euphrasie was deeply loved. Although always thoughtful of others, her virtues were not negative or passive. She brought to the office of Superior-General enthusiasm and energy, carrying out, first of all, the projects planned under the previous administration; and venturing into new endeavors as the way for them opened. Her first concern was the welfare of the schools. As second assistant to Mother Mary Ephrem, educational work in the Community was her concern. Her interest did not diminish in her new appointment, but she delegated this work to Sister Mary Ursula Fearn and contented herself with exhortations in her circulars to the Community, and when meeting the Sisters and classes on her annual visitation. She was deeply concerned at the lack of material resources, unavailable at this time to the Catholic schools which must maintain themselves without the financial help ordered by law to the public schools. She stressed the necessity of study and self-improvement, and urged the Sisters to bring their zeal and devotedness into play in order to attract pupils, to develop their abilities, and above all, to instill in them the love of their faith and their Catholic heritage.

Many delightful anecdotes are related of her reactions to what some more severe persons would think serious faults; for instance, the case of the novice who had charge of cleaning the lamp chimneys, and who had broken a number of them. To her question, "How many?" the novice answered, "Seventeen chimneys and a lamp." Mother admonished her to be more careful and to learn some deftness in performing this duty, always the task of the youngest Sister in the days of the coal oil lamps.

She was always quietly amused at the efforts of the Sisters to make her stay pleasant, borrowing nicer tablecloths and knives and forks from other better supplied missions. She must have recognized the reappearing pattern as she recognized the "fish problem," a puzzler in arithmetic, which appeared in the eighth grade classes. What its form was is not now known, but as she started on her round of visitation, Bishop Chatard told her she would probably meet the "fish problem" on her rounds; and when she did, so repeatedly, she could not disguise

her mirth and had to offer an explanation rather than embarrass the teacher too much.

Another Sister who taught boys, lamented her lot loud and long to Sister Euphrasie when she was a congenial private Sister. Sister Euphrasie, to console her and with no premonition of the future, said to her, "Never mind, when I'm Superior-General, I'll see that you teach girls." There were many reasons for Mother Euphrasie's consternation at the result of the election, but not too serious among them was the appearance of this Sister at her office door the morning after the election. She had come to remind Mother of her light-hearted promise to release her from teaching boys. Mother explained that she could not do it during the oncoming school session as places on the missions had already been filled, but that in the following year she could keep her promise. She did so, but in the course of a year or so, the Sister was willing to resume her teaching of boys which had been very successful and which she had enjoyed more than she had realized.²

In 1883, permission had been given by Bishop Chatard for Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on the first Friday of January. In November, 1883, the permission was confirmed to be part of the regular First Friday devotion. The First Friday fell on November 2 that year and the Exposition was transferred to Sunday, November 4, but after that it became an established practice for First Friday.

The prospects seemed bright for an administration free from the anxieties of the previous ones. However, each administration experiences its own consolations and trials. One burden lifted from Mother Euphrasie's mind was the satisfactory settlement of the Madison Hotel problem. The hotel had been purchased by Mother Anastasie in 1870³ and remained for nearly fifteen years as an expensive and losing investment. No longer could the one school in Madison meet the needs of the children, and the opening of a new school under the care of Ursuline Sisters cut into the enrollment.

In 1884, Madison became aware that it did not have a suitable hostel for tourists, and began to investigate the possibility of buying back the hotel property. The Sisters of Providence were pleased at the opportunity of selling it. The Messrs. C. A. Korbly, John Adams, and T. C. Calloway were appointed to confer with the Sisters for the restoration of the hotel to its original use. The Sisters sold the property for eighteen thousand dollars — nine thousand dollars in cash and nine thousand dollars in stock in the hotel corporation. The Sisters then authorized

Mr. Adams to buy back a part of our old property on Broadway for forty-five hundred dollars, and the transaction was completed on June 10, 1884.⁴

The Sisters moved back to St. Michael's parish where St. Anne's Academy had formerly been operated, reassuming the inconvenience of a long walk to go to daily Mass and the isolation of their convent. But to complete the Madison affair, the author projects into the happenings of twenty years later. The trustees of St. Michael's claimed the ownership of a vacant lot, stating that the deed to the property stipulated that the Sisters should erect a school building; that they did not do so, but that instead, they had bought the Madison Hotel. The trustees of the parish suggested arbitration of the matter, but a thorough examination of the deed by legal counsel showed that no such requirement was included. No arbitration was the decision, and the matter dragged out in a tedious way. In June, 1904, the Sisters disposed of all the property in Madison owned by the Community, and closed the school. The enrollment had diminished to such an extent that there were not enough pupils for the three teachers.⁵ The rapid development of classes in larger schools which the Sisters of Providence had opened in other places demanded more personnel.

The building once housing the Holy Angels Academy was converted into a hotel again by the hotel corporation, and remained as such until it was torn down to make way for a parking lot and a Kroger Grocery Store.⁶

Chatsworth, Illinois

Requests from all sides came from hardworking pastors to open schools for their children. Distance from the motherhouse was something to be considered, but scarcity of Sisters was the predominant reason for refusal. Finally, one request came just at the right time for the Sisters to feel that it could be arranged. Reverend William Van der Hagen, pastor of St. Patrick's Church, Chatsworth, had erected a spacious three-story brick building designed to be used as a convent and school. The pastor promised the school and equipment, but the convent part was to be furnished by the Sisters. The advantage of Chatsworth was its proximity to a number of small towns from which boarding pupils might be expected to come. The pastor furnished one-half of the coal used in the building, and the income of the Sisters

was to come from the tuition, board, and music lessons of the pupils. No other mention of salary was made.

The parish school opened with two hundred pupils under Sister Gertrude Sherlock as superior, Sister St. Fidelia Ackerman, Sister Domitilla Tahan, Sister St. Germaine Wenger, Sister Mary Gregoria Slattery, and Sister Mary Sylvester Nicolai. Bishop John Lancaster Spalding of Peoria blessed the house and gave permission for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament in the convent chapel, telling the Sisters that this permission was indeed their right.⁷

As soon as the parochial school had a good start, and when the pupils were sufficiently advanced to begin high school work, the Academy came into its full development. A Catholic Academy had been much desired, although the town had a very good public school system in operation. The Chatsworth Centennial booklet of 1967 has a résumé of the important civic and educational events during the years. Among the latter occurs the two-day celebration of St. Patrick Academy on its patronal feast, March 17 and 18, 1889, by the presentation of a play, "The Witch of Rosenberg." Twenty-three young ladies took part in the cast of characters, in addition to the number in the choruses in which the music pupils appeared.⁸

Every year about a week before Christmas, Father Van der Hagen rented the town hall in order to hold a fair there. The records are incomplete as to the financial success of the venture as the proceeds were always turned over to the parish.⁹

The Catholic population in Chatsworth was small and always seemed to have financial worries. The burden of the maintenance of the Academy, especially since the shift of the Catholic population in the nearby towns from which the Academy drew its patronage, inclined Reverend John J. Quinn, the successor of Father Van der Hagen, to advise people to send their children to the public schools. The latter action limited the attendance still further and caused the closing of the Academy in 1898. St. Patrick remained the name of the parish until a new church and rectory were built in 1890-91, and the parish renamed in honor of Sts. Peter and Paul.¹⁰

Five Chatsworth girls entered Providence novitiate: Sister Mary Leonidas Kennedy, Sister Joseph Mary Lawler, Sister Joseph Cecile Fitzgerald and her sister, Sister Mary Rosarie Fitzgerald, and Sister St. Camilla Kelley.

1899, the Holy Cross Sisters replaced the Sisters of Providence in

the parochial school, but not until October, 1916, was the idea of a Catholic high school revived, and then only for a short time. On November 15, 1917, a personal letter from Bishop Edmund H. Dunne of Peoria asked the Sisters of Providence to resume charge of the parochial school at Chatsworth which they had opened in 1884, and from which they had reluctantly withdrawn in 1898. Dearth of Sisters to fill the rapidly developing schools established by the Sisters of Providence in the meantime, made it impossible to take Bishop Dunne's offer,¹¹ although the Sisters always loved their work at Chatsworth.

In 1921 the high school which had been begun reverted to a grade school, while the original St. Patrick's Academy was used as a convent. In 1920, fire destroyed most of the church property, and a new building plan went into effect. The original three-story brick school and convent combined was torn down to make way for a new parish hall.¹²

Lemont, Illinois

Although applications by pastors to the Sisters to take charge of schools were multiplying rapidly, very few of them could receive a favorable answer. The schools already held by the Sisters of Providence were showing a rapid increase in numbers. It was only, therefore, through the persistent interest of Reverend Arnold Damen, S.J., that a school in the "Irish parish" of Lemont was accepted with the permission of Dr. J.J. McGovern, the pastor at Lockport.

Mother Euphrasie agreed to take this mission after the new pastor, Reverend J.E. Hogan, had visited St. Mary's in February, 1884, in the hope of making arrangements. Seven Sisters arrived on August 20, 1884. Sister Basilissa Heiner, superior, and Sister Mary Helena Franey, stopped at Lemont. When they found that the Sisters' residence was not completed, the other five, Sisters Ann Augustine Malloy, Mary Leona Coffey, Modesta Nolan, Marion Cecile Spencer, and Ann Liguori Butler, went on to Lockport to stay until the convent was ready.

Lemont was a small town, surrounded by stone quarries which afforded about the only occupation for the men. The usual contract was drawn up, the only difference being that the Sisters agreed to furnish desks for teachers and pupils. The school opened with one hundred and twenty pupils and gave promise of success, but many unreasonable

demands were made upon the Sisters. One thing the pastor demanded was that the music teacher should play the organ in the church, a procedure which was strictly prohibited in the Community at that time and for years afterwards. Another point of difference was the pastor's insistence that the Sunday school instruction to the children by the Sisters should be given in the church. The Sisters preferred the schoolroom on account of the privacy and the ease with which the attention of the children could be maintained in the familiar surroundings of the schoolroom. The discussions, which were private, but which showed the difference of opinion, were carried to the parishioners through sermons in the church, containing open criticism of the Sisters and their work. Finally, the pastor removed the Blessed Sacrament from the Sisters' chapel. Deeply discouraged at their inability to maintain the atmosphere of charity, the Sisters appealed to Archbishop Feehan. He gave his consent to their withdrawal in June, 1888. Sister Anna Marie Clarke and her sister, Sister Francis Rita Clarke were the only members of the Community who entered from Lemont. Among the familiar names on the faculty list was that of Sister Marion Cecile Spencer who, after some missionary experience, was associated with the Conservatory of Music at St. Mary-of-the-Woods as a teacher, and later, as the head of the department.

Savanna, Illinois

In 1884, Father Damen, while preaching a mission at Savanna, Illinois, urged the pastor, Rev. F.X. Antel, S.J., to ask the Sisters of Providence to take charge of his school. Although Savanna was an out-of-the-way place in the northwestern corner of Illinois, quite remote from Galesburg and Lockport, still the Sisters were happy to come into the Rockford diocese. The terms were about the same as those regulating contracts with other schools: two hundred dollars a year for each teacher. The Sisters were to collect the tuition from the pupils who could pay and the pastor would make up the deficit.

Mother Euphrasie had been reluctant to accept the mission on account of its distance, especially since she was besieged by requests for additional Sisters in all the previously established schools. Savanna opened with an attendance of sixty-five. Sister St. Irma Lefebvre, Sister Mary Elvire Lynn, professed, and two novices: Sister Mary Aquilla de Bruler and Sister Mary Josepha Meyer, made up the faculty.

But gradually the enrollment which seemed so encouraging diminished, until in August, 1901, Savanna no longer appeared on the Obedience List.

Sister Geraldine Mullen, a native of Savanna, seems to be the only representative in the Sisters of Providence from this place. Sister Geraldine will be remembered as prefect of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods Academy in the 1920's and General Secretary of the Community (1926-1932).

Bishop Chatard Plans to Go to Rome

Bishop Chatard paid a last visit to Saint Mary-of-the-Woods on September 25, 1883, spending two days in conference with Mother Euphrasie, visiting classes, and seeing any of the Sisters who wished to see him. He did not expect to come again before going to Rome for his *ad limina* visit in November. On his return to Indianapolis, the Bishop sent Father Guéguen a copy of the Holy Father's request that the coming feast of the Holy Rosary, October 7, be celebrated throughout the Catholic world with pomp and solemnity. The letter also contained the conditions for obtaining the Plenary Indulgence during October.¹³

The celebration on that bright seventh of October opened with High Mass. No visiting priests are mentioned as each local parish had been notified to observe the day. Although the recollection of Retreat Sunday continued, there was an air of festive joy apparent. In the afternoon at two-thirty, a procession of Academy pupils, postulants, novices, and Sisters, headed by the cross-bearer, and here and there showing an ornamental banner, left the chapel, crossed the wooden bridge outside Providence and turned west to the grotto on the north campus. Decades of the Rosary, interspersed with hymns, marked the long walk. At the grotto, a final decade of the beads, some hymns, and orations, concluded the visit. The singing of the Litany of Loretto marked the return trip. There was still another dear shrine to visit, that of Our Lady of the Woods in Providence Park. The musical accompaniment being, very probably, the violin and guitar, the singing of the *Ave Maris Stella* closed the act of homage and the long defile of devout lovers of our Lady entered the chapel to assist at Vespers and Benediction.

Concerns at Lockport, Illinois, and Valparaiso, Indiana

Mother Euphrasie who had been in Chicago for a short business trip returned in time for Rosary Sunday. Mother had planned to visit the Michigan missions, but postponed the visit till later. Accompanied by Sister Mary Ursula Fearn, she called on Archbishop Feehan to give him a check for fifteen hundred dollars for the Lockport property which Reverend James J. McGovern had asked us to buy. The transaction was a gain to each of the parties. Lockport was then sure of a permanent mission and convent, and the Sisters of Providence were happy and secure there, firmly anchored in the archdiocese of Chicago.¹⁴

Reverend Michael O'Reilly, of Valparaiso, invited the Sisters to attend the cornerstone laying of his new church. As it was not customary for Sisters to be present at such functions, an exception was made in this case. Mother Mary Ephrem and Sister Olympiade represented the Community. The diary, noting the date of October 3, 1883, points out that the acceptance is not to be considered the general rule. "It is an exception." The Sisters of Providence had taught in Valparaiso in this school, since 1872.

Dedication of St. Anthony Hospital

On January 1, 1884, St. Anthony Hospital, Terre Haute, the generous gift of Mr. Herman Hulman in memory of his late wife, was dedicated with due ceremony by the Reverend August Bessonies, Vicar General of the diocese. About fifteen hundred persons were present. Speeches made by Colonel Richard W. Thompson and Senator Voorhees extolled the philanthropic spirit of the donor. The Franciscan Sisters from Lafayette were to assume charge of the hospital. The Superior General was the guest of St. Mary's on the occasion. Through the long years since then, many bonds of friendship and gratitude have linked the two communities in a happy relationship.

For ninety-three years, St. Anthony Hospital ministered to the needs of those who sought its aid. It retained the name until time and change demanded more space be found for the development of its resources. The Hospital was the nucleus of the present Terre Haute Regional Hospital. The transfer of the St. Anthony Hospital ownership took place on June 10, 1975.¹⁵

The Bishop in Europe

The itinerary of the reverend traveler was well traced by postcards from Queenstown on November 18, and later letters from Rome. Mother Euphrasie had written, enclosing a draft for one hundred dollars, and requesting the Bishop to execute some commissions for the Sisters. A note from His Excellency from Florence asked Mother to send a copy of *An Apostolic Woman* to Cardinal Howard, with whom he had dined in Rome. The inscription should state that it was a presentation from the Sisters of St. Mary-of-the-Woods. It was not a personal gift from the Bishop. The prelate, living in Rome, was greatly interested in the parochial system in the United States. The book would portray aspects of Catholic education of which the Bishop felt justly proud. There was an additional bit of information. The Bishop had bought a country scene for Sister Maurice's studio as he felt her art students would like something direct from Italy. Another pleasant encounter was a meeting by chance with Archbishop Feehan of Chicago, especially since Mother Euphrasie's recent meeting with the Archbishop over the Lockport property made a good conversational opening.

Two months passed quickly in the congenial environment of Rome where Bishop Chatard had so many old friends. Pope Leo XIII was most cordial to him and welcomed him like an old friend. On February 15, the Bishop returned to the United States, and on February 19, 1884, a reception by the clergy greeted him in Indianapolis. Fathers Guéguen and Riehle attended in spite of the bitterly cold weather.

The Bishop came to St. Mary's on February 25, 1884. In order to greet him with the customary ceremonial due a returning prelate, it was necessary to postpone Forty Hours' Devotion which since 1843 had been held on the three days preceding Ash Wednesday.¹⁶ Father Riehle met the Bishop at the station, and as the carriage drew near the gate, guns were fired and bells were rung until the Bishop reached the chapel where the Sisters and pupils were assembled. After the ceremonial of the reception was concluded, the Bishop addressed the audience, speaking especially of the Holy Father and the interest His Holiness showed in Catholic education. After imparting the Apostolic Blessing, the Bishop gave Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament. An entertainment given by the young lady graduates followed in the evening.

On Ash Wednesday, His Excellency said the Community Mass, and

blessed and distributed ashes. Continuing his visitation of the diocese, the Bishop left for Vincennes on the afternoon train.¹⁷ Quiet descended on the campus and the Forty Hours' Devotion began as scheduled on February 29.

Change and the Future Tap St. Rose, Vincennes, Again

Few of our missions have met and adapted themselves to changing circumstances as well as St. Rose has done. The building, originally Vincennes University, became St. Gabriel's College, directed by the Eudist Fathers until their projected departure in 1847-48. Bishop Bazin purchased it, and had it directed by diocesan priests. In the course of time, the building became successively, an orphanage, a school, an emergency hospital, and finally St. Rose Academy.¹⁸

Standing alone on a tract of land, four city blocks in area, the St. Rose Academy attracted the attention of city officials who were concerned about so much land being unoccupied in the center of the town. Bishop Chatard, the administrator of the diocese, was approached on the subject of selling some of the land. He wrote to Mother Euphrasie stating that it was his intention to permit the city to cut streets through the college grounds, and that in justice to the diocese, the Bishop felt obliged to utilize the land lying waste around the building. The Sisters had ventured a respectful remonstrance asking that the historic old building, now St. Rose, be spared if possible. That request could not be granted as the Academy was centrally located on the tract of land. The Bishop then made the proposition that the Sisters buy the land bounded approximately by the line of Seminary, Fifth, and Hart Streets (165 ft. on Seminary, 215 ft. on Fifth, and 225 ft. from Seminary to Hart, including the 15 ft. alley to be made from Seminary to Hart Street). The Sisters would pay five thousand dollars in six years' time with four per cent annual interest. The Sisters would receive an indemnity of two thousand dollars for the needed improvements, and all the material from the buildings still on the premises. In June, 1884, the present building would be taken down and the new academy commenced at a total cost of seventeen thousand and sixty-one dollars.¹⁹

A New Residence for the Chaplain — 1884

More than forty years had passed since the house for Father Corbe had been erected by Jean Marie Marcile, Bishop de la Hailandière's

builder, in 1841. Unquestionably, the house needed an addition and remodeling, as it was none too secure. Thieves had broken into it on two different occasions. With Bishop Chatard's sanction, ways and means were under consideration during 1884. First of all, the trees and flowering shrubs were removed from Father Guéguen's garden, the grape arbor was taken down and the ground cleared.

Mr. Bohlen, the architect, brought Nuerge and Reinking, contractors, from Indianapolis, to begin work at once. At first it was thought that an addition could be put on and much of the old house saved, but after testing the walls, the contractors found that plan impossible. Only one of the inside walls, now unidentified, could be preserved as part of the retaining structure. The Diary notes for October 20, 1884: "Dinner tonight is the last meal to be served in the venerable house," which was to be demolished the next day.

Father Guéguen had selected for his temporary quarters two rooms above the bakery. At first they seemed unfit, but in fact they made pleasant accommodations for the time being. The bakery was located on the site of the present fan house, west of the present infirmary. On the evening of the tearing down of the residence, a telephoned message from Indianapolis stated that the Bishop would come the next day. Hurried arrangements were made to lodge the Bishop with Father Riehle in the village rectory. Meals were to be served in Mother's office for the Bishop and Father Guéguen.

The Bishop arrived, but he had expected to be lodged in his old room, thinking that the old house was still habitable.²⁰ "He was vexed beyond expression," the diarist notes. To make matters worse, a heavy rain ensued, and the makeshift arrangements were not satisfactory. The Bishop then said Mass in the village church and left for Indianapolis on the afternoon train. A later visit in February, even though the new rectory was not finished, found the Bishop peacefully at home with Father Guéguen over the bakery.

Foundation Day, 1884

The program which had been arranged for the Bishop was postponed, and the novitiate took over the celebration of the forty-fourth anniversary of Foundation Day. The Sisters, however, were not chagrined or embarrassed at something which was nobody's fault. They devoted their minds and hearts to thinking of Mother Theodore

and her brave companions, two of whom, Sister Olympiade and Sister Mary Xavier, were present on the feast day, together with Sister Agnes Dukant, the only surviving postulant who awaited the Sisters' coming. Sister Mary Ambrose O'Donald marked her thirty-fourth anniversary. Honored guests at the program were: Mother Theodore's niece, Sister Mary Theodore Le Touzé, Sister Martina Lehnen, Mother Anastasie, and Sister Lazarus Smith from the Institute. A general invitation could not be sent to the Sisters at the Institute because most of them had to remain with the pupils. As one feature of the celebration, the Sisters invited our former workmen who lived in the village to have dinner with the men at the men's house.

The Bishop Attends the Third Plenary Council

The Council was called for November 9 to December 7, 1884, by Archbishop James Gibbons who had been named by Pope Leo XIII to preside as Apostolic Delegate. In the two preceding Plenary Councils, an Apostolic Delegate had been sent from Rome for the occasion. The United States was still regarded as a missionary country under the direction of the Propaganda. The growth of the American church was so great that only harmony of action could unify the regions accustomed to French, Spanish, and English ecclesiastical laws. Formerly, the lack of communication from ocean to ocean, and north to south, seemed to indicate a possible danger to uniformity in the Church of America. In 1884, the Civil War was over, and its issues were healing by an approach to political unity. The railroads and telegraph made communication much easier, and also the assembling of the Catholic hierarchy of the United States.²¹

The preparation for the work of the Council occupied two years, and so methodical was the outlining of topics that the effects were bound to be far-reaching. A system of canon law; a catechism arranged on three levels of instruction: primary, secondary, and college; the parochial school system; continuing education of religious teachers; and many aspects of Catholic life were given full treatment. Care and supervision of Catholic education was mandatory, and still remains as a duty today: "All institutions of learning conducted by diocesan priests and religious should be subject to the control of the bishop." Even the far-off hope of a Catholic University neared realization.²²

The development of the United States hierarchy was prodigious. In

1784 Bishop John Carroll was the only bishop in the country. In 1884, fourteen archbishops, sixty-one bishops, one abbot, and one head of a religious order, signed the Proceedings of the Council which were sent to Rome for ratification. Education was a vital topic to Bishop Chatard, and the ensuing years were to show his fidelity to the Council prescriptions.

The Increasing Illness of Monsignor Benoit

Mother Euphrasie's administration had been, in general, both peaceful and successful. Money worries were, of course, never absent from her mind, but she was able to meet the financial needs as they presented themselves. The poor health of her friend and patron, Monsignor Benoit, was a cause of anxiety. Although he made no claim for sympathy, Mother Euphrasie and the Sisters could see that he was failing. In 1884, he spent a few days at St. Mary's to celebrate his seventy-sixth birthday on October 17, 1884. He ordered a special treat of candy for all the Sisters, novices, and pupils, and in return the Community entertained him at a special program. He said Mass on October 18, and gave recreation liberally to the Community that day.

Mother Euphrasie could not delay her visitation of the Michigan schools. She departed two days later for Port Huron, Michigan, with Sister Mary Stanislaus Hayes. Since the trip to and from Michigan always involved an overnight stay at St. Augustine's, Fort Wayne, there would be an opportunity later for a quiet visit from Father Benoit.

Mother Euphrasie's fragile health could not stand the cold northern air of Port Huron, and after a short visit there, she went to Saginaw. Here she became very ill; so ill, and suffering such pain in her chest and heart that she prayed for relief. She wrote Sister Mary Cleophas that only after five days of intense pain was she able to leave her bed, but was forbidden by the doctor to go to the church. Mass was said on Sunday in the Sisters' chapel, by Father Van der Bom. After an additional week of convalescence, Mother went to visit the Sisters in the more temperate climate of Centerline and Ypsilanti, Michigan.²³

Visitation of the Sisters at the convent was included in the return stop at Fort Wayne as well as a visit to Monsignor Benoit. Mother was shocked by the change a month had made in his appearance. During her visit with her good Father, he gave her a check for three thousand dollars with the condition that the Sisters pay him an annuity of two

hundred and forty dollars as long as he lived. He explained that he did not want the annual payment except that when the widow or the orphan appealed, he wanted to have something to give.²⁴

Mother was tempted to by-pass Delphi and Peru, but she was faithful to her itinerary and completed her work on December 20. She was still suffering from the intense exhaustion of her illness in Port Huron, and her grave condition on Christmas eve plunged the Sisters into gloom. Dr. Wright, summoned from Indianapolis, found Mother Euphrasie's lungs seriously affected and prescribed treatment and rest.

Daily reports had been coming in regarding Monsignor Benoit whose disease was now diagnosed as cancer of the throat. He was asking to see Mother Euphrasie if she were able to come; or, if not, Sister Mary Ambrose in her place. Mother sent Sister Olympiade and Sister Mary Ambrose, as it was impossible for her to make the trip herself. Monsignor Benoit lingered until January 26, enduring his suffering with great patience.

Mother Anastasie and Sister Joachim represented the Community at the funeral in the Cathedral at Fort Wayne. Mother Euphrasie ordered additional prayers to be said for the repose of his soul, trusting that each Sister who knew him would pray for him all her life. The circular said that a Requiem Mass with funeral service was to be celebrated on January 30, 1885, in our chapel and each mission was to have a Mass said. Mother emphasized Monsignor Benoit's long-standing, devoted care for the Sisters of Providence.²⁵

Madame la Marquise de Kermel Visits the Woods

Flitting through the Diary pages is mention of a delightful personality, Madame la Marquise de Kermel, introduced by Bishop Chatard and identified by him as the daughter of General Philip Kearny, U.S.A.²⁶ The Marquise was anxious to spend the Christmas holidays at Saint Mary's as she had met some of the Sisters of Providence several years before. The Bishop himself had known her in Rome in 1866-67. As rector of the American College in Rome, he arranged passes and introductions for American visitors to meet the Holy Father. He was "practically an ambassador," as was said of him.

The Marquise arrived on January 26, 1885, and was lodged in a two-room suite in the Institute. Her meals were served in her study, but she frequently met the young ladies, first at a reception in her honor in

the parlor, then informally later on. At the reception she wore black, with black kid gloves, but nothing on her head. Conversation buzzed for several days over the details of her appearance, as it was known that she was still in mourning. A little later, she made a few trips to Terre Haute, bringing candy to the pupils, and on February 12, Lincoln's birthday, she treated the Sisters and the graduates to ice cream. On the next evening, she sang "Panis Angelicus" at Benediction. Later she visited Mother Mary Cecilia at the Orphanage, but the time was approaching for her departure. On March 21, she said goodbye to all with much affection, and left to return to her estates in Brittany.

Community Interest in Politics

While there was no prophetic heralding of that far-off day when women might record their opinions on political issues, yet the Community was aware of the importance of national, state, and local officers. These men and their policies affected the fortunes of the Church, and the Sisters showed their interest in the only way open to them. During the contest between Grover Cleveland and James G. Blaine for the presidency, candles were burned all day before the Blessed Sacrament on election day to ask that the proper choice be made by the voters; and that God's Will and the people's will would coincide. The diarist notes on November 7, 1884: "Cleveland was elected, the first democrat after twenty-four years." But Inauguration Day, March 4, 1885, brought no other comment. The Rule was their guide: "The Sisters shall not occupy themselves with the opinions of others, especially on political subjects."

The Chaplain's Residence Finished

It took almost a year to complete the new residence as very little building could be done in the coldest weather. At last, early in the spring of 1885, the plastering was finished, the walks laid, and the plumbing completed. Father Guéguen still lived in the two rooms above the bakery until late May. But he had the furnace tried out before he moved in. The house needed furnishings. Mother Euphrasie and Sister Mary Cleophas went to town to buy carpets, draperies, and furniture. The kitchen was set up so that all would be ready for the close of school.

In the meantime, two interesting lucky events happened. Mr. James Foley had some tickets for a raffle held by Pixley and Company, Terre Haute. He gave them to Sister Mary Cleophas, and suggested that the name of a newly-arrived postulant be written on them. The postulant was Lizzie Riordan, later Sister Delphine, who immediately won a complete bedroom suite. "Too nice for the convent, and unlike the Academy furniture." The verdict, "Just the thing for the Bishop's bedroom." Then Sister Mary Theodosia, venturing to enter a contest sponsored by a New York tea company, won the award, a complete dinner set of beautiful china. "Where shall we put it? In the chaplain's residence, of course!"

It was fortunate that no shrubs or trees had been put in to replace those which had been taken out to permit building. This was the year of the plague of the seventeen-year locusts, and they would have left nothing green uneaten in their progress. True to the laws governing their survival, the periodical cicada, or the locusts, appeared on the morning of May 30, 1885.

At Commencement time, in June, 1885, Bishop Chatard and fourteen priests were accommodated, for meals and housing, in the new chaplain's residence.

In the course of time, further expansion became necessary. Constant replenishing of rugs, draperies, and other furnishings, went on during the succeeding years, but nobody won any more prizes!

NOTES — CHAPTER XX

1. Sister St. Cosmas Gallagher, "Mother Euphrasie Hinkle," *In God's Acre*, p. 89.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 90.
3. See **Chapter IX**, p. 000.
4. Book of Important Events, 1880-1914, p. 31.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 185.
6. Information furnished by the Librarian of the Madison-Jefferson Library, Madison, Indiana.
7. Book of the Foundations, p. 51.
8. *Chatsworth Area Centennial Celebration* booklet, 1967, unpage.
9. Sister Mary Leonidas Kennedy, Reminiscences. Typescript, 1952.
10. *Ibid.*
11. Book of Important Events, 1914-1941, p. 71.
12. *Chatsworth* booklet, "Sts. Peter and Paul Church."
13. Community Diary, October 1, 1883.

14. *Ibid.*, September 27, 1883.
15. *Terre Haute Tribune-Star*, June 29, 1975.
16. Community Diary, February 25, 1884.
17. *Ibid.*, February 27, 1884.
18. See **Chapter V**, p. 74.
19. Bishop Chatard to Mother Euphrasie, March 22, 1884.
20. Book of Important Events, 1880-1914, p. 35.
21. Allen Sinclair Will, *Life of Cardinal Gibbons* (Baltimore: John Murphy, 1911), **Chapter VIII**.
22. Francis P. Cassidy, "Catholic Education in the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore," *Catholic Historical Review*, October 1948-49.
23. Mother Euphrasie to Sister Mary Cleophas, November 14, 1884.
24. Mother Euphrasie to Sister Mary Ambrose O'Donald, December 3, 1884.
25. Monsignor Benoit had been a devoted friend to the Sisters of Providence from the day in 1842 when he first met Mother Theodore. His encouragement meant much to her in her days of trial.
26. Bishop Chatard to Mother Euphrasie, December 3, 1884.

CHAPTER XXI

The Sisters of Providence Begin a Long Life in Chicago

New Convents: St. Ann, Lafayette; St. Paul, Greencastle,
St. Philip's and Our Lady of Sorrows, Chicago

The illness and death of Monsignor Benoit saddened the Community in general, and Mother Euphrasie in particular, but the coming months were to bring her the great joy of reconciliation with her estranged family. Twenty years had elapsed since Mother had entered the Sisters of Providence, and more than that since she had become a Catholic. The disapproval of her brother and sister still continued, although Mother tried to keep in touch with them, sending them news about the convent, and seasonal greetings. Sister Mary Ambrose O'Donald, secretary, sent them personal news of Mother Euphrasie from time to time. The return greetings were at first only perfunctory. Mother's poor health was touched upon from time to time.

These efforts bore fruit. In response to repeated invitations to come to St. Mary's, Mr. William Hinkle, Mother Euphrasie's brother, his wife, and two of their daughters, came from Carrollton, Kentucky, on May 11, 1885, for a three-day visit. Mr. Hinkle had read *An Apostolic Woman*, and was so charmed by the life of Sister St. Francis that he named his youngest child, Irma, in her honor. Anna, named for Mother Euphrasie, was somewhat older.

The happiness of the Sisters, their evident love for Mother Euphrasie, the light-hearted novices, and the multiplied attentions of the visit, made them realize that Mother had not withdrawn herself into a cheerless and unhappy life. The Hinkles remained Methodists, but their appreciation of the religious life from a Catholic angle was clarified. Mother's sister, Mrs. Betty Howard, came in September, bringing the elder daughter, Adrienne Hinkle, who had been visiting her in Lexington, Tennessee. The middle daughter, Anna, had wanted to stay during the visit in May, but her parents thought her too young then. Later, she did enroll in 1894, graduating with the class of 1898.¹

Mother Euphrasie was unusually fortunate in having Sister Mary Ambrose as secretary. Her cordial letters not only smoothed the Hinkle

relationship, but she handled regular correspondence with tact. Every month brought requests for the Community to open new schools. Opportunities for advancement into new fields were attractive, but limitation of personnel almost always prevented acceptance. A request from Mother Mary de Sales, superior of the Presentation Convent in Snew, County Kerry, Ireland, had a charm of its own. She explained that the Presentation Sisters, semi-enclosed, wished to sell their convent and property. The building and location, and the large campus, would be more suitable to a boarding school than to an enclosed community. The price suggested was very reasonable: one-third of the cost at purchase, and the remaining two-thirds to be arranged. Attractive as such an offer was, it was out of the question on account of the distance, and other technicalities. Then came the questions: "Why ask us? Where could they have learned our name?" A little reflection gave the answer.

When *Une Femme Apôtre*, the original of *An Apostolic Woman*, appeared in 1879, the Indiana Sisters were anxious to publish a good English translation. Recourse was had to Ireland to secure a successful translator who used the pseudonym, "A Nun of Kenmare." Her services were not available. A search in the atlas for Snew, County Kerry, Ireland, revealed its location on the Kenmare River and answered the questions.

Sister Mary Ambrose had kept up a friendly exchange of letters with Mrs. Anna Newton, wife of Brevet Major-General John Newton of the U.S. Army Engineers. Mrs. Newton frequently asked prayers for General Newton's work, particularly in dynamiting the reefs and rocks at Hell Gate, at the entrance of the New York Harbor. This undertaking was especially dangerous, but on September 24, 1876, Major-General Newton succeeded in clearing away the outer obstructions at Hell Gate.² The finest harbor in the United States was completed. The Major-General allowed his two and one-half year old daughter, Mary, to press the button that activated the explosion. "The power of God and a baby's touch" — it was thus described by the convent poet.

On June 10, 1885, Sister Mary Ambrose sent a souvenir card to "little Mary Newton of Hell Gate fame," on the occasion of Mary's First Holy Communion. A grateful acknowledgment in return from Mrs. Newton³ asked also for a novena for a new project put under the Major-General's care. A gigantic rock, Flood Rock, was still a hindrance to the full approach to the harbor through the East River. Flood

Rock received the full force of the tides coming from Long Island Sound and those that detoured from the Atlantic through Sandy Hook. The differences in the times of the entrance and recession of the tides was very marked, and posed a constant danger to the ships trying to use the lower passage through Sandy Hook. One out of every fifty ships was damaged in the attempt. The task of clearing away the obstruction fell to Major-General Newton, and was safely accomplished on October 12, 1885. Again the hand of little Mary, now twelve years old, was called upon to set the mechanism into action. The venture was a success; the East River was widened from twenty-six to two hundred feet, and the rock was demolished. Sister Maurice depicted both scenes on a folder: Hell Gate on one side, and Flood Rock on the other.⁴

This series of letters is unusual in the fact that the two correspondents were never to meet. Begun by a congratulatory message sent by Sister Mary Ambrose in 1876 to Mrs. Newton, on reading the account of the incident at Hell Gate in the *Brooklyn Tablet*, it continued until 1917, the year of Sister Mary Ambrose's death. The history of the Newton family runs through the letters, and includes mention of the death of the General in 1893, Mrs. Newton's sojourn abroad for a year or two, and her final location in Washington, D.C. In 1905, Mrs. Newton met Mother Mary Cleophas and Sister Mary Alma, apparently her first meeting with the Sisters of Providence, at the time the two superiors came to make final arrangements for the opening of the Immaculata the following year.

St. Ann's School, Lafayette

Reverend George A. Hamilton erected St. Ann's Chapel on Wabash Avenue in 1870 for the convenience of travelers. The parish developed in May, 1884. In September, 1884, two Sisters of Providence, Sister Mary Kostka Schurger and Sister Mary Alberta Comer, taught the children of St. Ann's parish in the old church building. The Sisters resided at St. Ignatius Convent, but came each day to teach the children. On May 30, 1886, Reverend John Dempsey,⁵ the pastor of St. Ann's, requested another Sister as the number of children in the parish had increased. He offered to provide a convent for the Sisters as he wished them to locate in the parish, and form a separate mission. The Obedience list for 1886 named Sister Eugenia Gorman as superior, and Sisters Mary Kostka Schurger and Mary Philip Gaffney for St.

Ann's. The Sisters lived in a rented house near the old church where one hundred and forty-three children were taught, the eight grades being represented. The teachers very soon numbered five. The number declined to the required three in 1917, and the mission was closed in 1918.

The Catholic Directory for 1977 has St. Ann listed as a parish, with Indiana State Soldiers' Home still a mission station, but no school is listed.

St. Paul Academy, Greencastle, Indiana

Of all the mission schools opened by the Sisters of Providence, Greencastle, contrary to expectations, did not flourish for any length of time as had been hoped.⁶ It was subject to fluctuation and disappointment.

In 1880 and for a few years following, Greencastle, always a small town, experienced a period of growth. The influx of many black people from the South during the Garfield campaign increased the population.⁷ In addition, more railroads were being set up: The Big Four (C.C.C. & St.L.) and the Pennsylvania System were maintaining services east and west, and the Indianapolis, Chicago, and Louisville Railroad, north and south. They formed a junction at Greencastle. Hopes were entertained that the railroad shops would be located there eventually. New industries were begun and younger couples came with their children to settle in the town. The Catholics, generally speaking, were from County Kerry, Ireland, and were progressive and hard-working.

In 1884, Reverend Michael Power applied to Mother Euphrasie to open a school in the town. Mother went there to see what the prospects were, but declined the offer as there was no place ready for the Sisters, and no school except the old St. Benedict church which was used for many purposes by the parish. The Catholic women who had taught the children on Sunday, and who had prepared them for First Holy Communion, lived in their own homes and did not need a common dwelling. The present St. Paul Church had been blessed by Bishop de Saint Palais on Sunday, June 10, 1866.⁸ The building was formerly the Old School Presbyterian Church bought by Father Mougin with money raised by the parish. During the following years, it had been altered and improved until it presented a handsome appearance.⁹

In 1886, Reverend Thomas X. Logan, recently returned as pastor from St. Patrick's, Terre Haute, applied to Mother Euphrasie, and promised to secure a deed for property near the church if the Sisters would build the school. Mother Euphrasie agreed to this and began the erection of a three-story brick school and convent. The property was deeded to the Sisters on June 28, 1886, by Bishop Chatard. The initial cost of erecting the building was \$12,410.52.¹⁰ The addition of furnishings, desks, convent furniture of the greatest simplicity, and always a piano, brought the investment to a large amount.

The cornerstone laying on May 13, 1887, was attended by a large number of Greencastle citizens of all religious denominations. The document in the cornerstone names the important officials in church and state, only a few being present for the ceremony. The Very Reverend Monsignor August Bessonies, vicar-general of the diocese, blessed and placed the cornerstone of the school which was to be under the care of the pastor, Reverend Thomas X. Logan, and the Sisters of Providence. Listed as honorary patrons were Pope Leo XIII, Bishop Francis Silas Chatard, Bishop of the diocese, Grover Cleveland, President of the United States, and Isaac P. Cray, Governor of Indiana.¹¹

The school opened in September, 1887, under very favorable conditions. The pupils numbered one hundred and seventy, of whom twenty-eight were ready for high school. Seven Sisters made up the faculty: Sisters Theodata Stokes, Mary Pelagia Comerford, Xavieria Sheehan, St. Wilhelmina Schmits, St. Thomas Daly, Mary Leona Coffey, and Mary Leonard Wolfe. The superior, Sister Theodata Stokes, was an accomplished music teacher. It was thought that in the expanding prosperity of the town, music, and even art, might be asked for. The school was to be supported by tuition from the pupils, and with some help from the parish. Much depended on the enrollment as, according to an old saying of the Community, "Tuition puts the bread on the table, but music puts the butter on it."

In a few years, the bright hopes were shattered. The railroad shops did not locate in Greencastle, but were built in larger towns. The blacks, disappointed in not getting work, moved to other localities, and some even returned to the South. The younger Catholic people, on whom so much depended, followed the movement of the industries, and only the older Catholics remained.¹²

In 1903, the diminishing enrollment in St. Paul's school, and the spiritual privations of the Sisters — what these latter were we cannot

say positively now — caused the Sisters ask permission from the Bishop to withdraw, and to sell the building. They felt that four or five Sisters should not remain to teach twenty-three children when on the larger missions, in one place after another, one Sister had to teach seventy or eighty children of the same grade in one room. The classes were ordered kept open by Bishop Denis O'Donaghue, auxiliary bishop, in the absence of Bishop Chatard.

There were no Sisters listed on the assignment list from 1903 to 1915. No classes were held after Bishop Chatard had given permission in 1903 to sell the building or lease part of it. The school was not an easy place to sell or lease. Care had to be taken in ascertaining the purpose for which the building was to be used. Its proximity to the church restricted its use as a hospital, or a hotel, unless personnel and occupants were approved with discernment.

From 1904 to 1910, George and Mary Blake rented a portion of the building as a hostel or rooming house. Unless the building were to be sold, the third floor was not leased or rented. In 1910, Professor Norris leased the available parts of the building for three years. He began a music conservatory, but his venture was not a success, and he relinquished the lease after the first year.¹³

A home for the orphan children of Greencastle was suggested, but the city authorities were not interested. A real estate firm tried to secure the school as a hospital, but nothing came of the attempt. During these years, repairs and care of the building were the responsibility of the Sisters unless damage was directly attributable to the lessee.

In 1915, Reverend William Maher, the pastor at Greencastle, persuaded Bishop Joseph Chartrand, then coadjutor to Bishop Chatard, to reopen the school. He thought the presence of the school and the Sisters would diminish any feeling of bigotry which existed in the town. Bishop Chartrand notified Mother Mary Cleophas to have the school opened.¹⁴ Very much against her better judgment, she was obliged to do so.

Father Maher agreed to the Sisters' conditions. He promised to pay two hundred dollars annually for each of the three Sisters, to heat the school, provide janitor service for the school, and to care for the spiritual needs of the Sisters in the matter of Mass and reception of sacraments. The Sisters agreed to teach five hours a day, five days of the week, and to supervise the children at church on Sunday.

School opened in September, 1915. Sister Mary Esther Bradley, Sister Charlotte Joyce, and Sister Mary Charles Campbell made up the faculty. The enrollment for the opening day counted twenty-eight children in attendance, including three Protestant children, and one black child. There were no applicants for music or art, and no boarders. The enrollment during the next five years varied from twenty-eight to forty-three. All grades had to be taught.

The Sisters had to be subsidized by St. Mary's as their annual total salary amounted only to three hundred dollars.¹⁵ Father John A. Walsh, the pastor succeeding Father Maher in 1918, sent Mother Mary Cleophas two Liberty Bonds for fifty dollars each, asking her to apply the bonds and interest to the needs of the Sisters. He remarked that he wished he could do more, but "Ready cash is a rare bird in this parish."

In 1921, five rooms in the building were rented to Dr. W. R. Hutcheson for his office and residence while his house was being built.

The Sisters liked Greencastle very much, but could not support themselves as there were not sufficient pupils to conduct school. There were four members of the Sisters of Providence who entered from Greencastle: Sister Mary Leontine Murphy,¹⁶ Sister Theresa Marie Cannon, Sister Mary Reparata Murphy, and Sister Ann Monica Inman, who entered from St. Mary-of-the-Woods College. Miss Elizabeth Anne Cannon, of St. Paul parish, attended Ladywood High School in Indianapolis, and St. Mary-of-the-Woods College.

We should not overlook Monsignor Augustine Rawlinson who, as a boy of nine, was in Sister Anysia Kelly's class in Greencastle. After he was ordained, he was appointed by the United States Military Service to be one of the two Catholic chaplains in World War I. His later years were spent as chaplain at St. Mary-of-the-Woods until a few months before his death in 1938.

In the meantime, what was the fate of St. Paul Academy? It was sold on July 20, 1922, to Mr. A. J. Duff, through the agency of Bunyan and Cannon for ten thousand dollars. Mr. Duff eventually sold it to the Charles A. McCurry Funeral Home. It passed through the hands of several other firms of funeral directors. It was eventually razed in 1967; the property was repurchased by the Catholic Church, and is now used as a parking area.¹⁷

First Openings in Chicago

In 1886, the Sisters were much interested in two invitations to Chicago and its vicinity. The first was to St. Philip's Church, Central Park, suburb of Chicago, and the second was to Our Lady of Sorrows Church, the mother parish of St. Philip's. The Servite Fathers, under Reverend Thomas Moreschini, O.S.M., had founded the parish of St. Philip's but in 1883 they resigned their jurisdiction to the archdiocese. Archbishop Feehan then appointed Reverend P. J. McDonnell as pastor of St. Philip's.¹⁸

Father McDonnell's parish was a challenge to him. It extended from Homan Avenue on the east to Melrose Park on the west, and from Twelfth Street on the south to North Avenue and the outlying prairies on the north, and its one hundred and fifty families were scattered hither and yon. The first necessity was a school which could create some unity in the wide-flung expanse.

The two invitations had come practically at the same time, and Mother Euphrasie, not knowing the distance between the parishes, decided to send the two groups together, and also to accompany them.¹⁹ The factual statement in the Book of Foundations is very businesslike, but the events are revitalized and embellished by the Reminiscences of Sister Mary Marcella Werner, one of the youngest Sisters in the group.

On August 17, 1886, we left St. Mary's about three in the afternoon, took our supper at St. Joseph's, Terre Haute, and left for Chicago on the midnight train. We traveled all night and arrived in Chicago at four o'clock. Father McDonnell met us with a cab — room for five, and were twelve! He got another cab, but said he had asked only for five Sisters. He asked where the others were going, and Mother Euphrasie said she would explain later.

We traveled through high prairie grass as tall as a man. The roads were rough and muddy, and there were no houses in sight between Kedzie Avenue and 42nd Street, nothing but open prairies with goats and wild geese roaming about.

At last we stopped at a small white cottage, but no furniture in the house. The ladies had prepared dinner for five, but had to borrow dishes and get food for twelve. Chairs and tables, beds and mattresses had not arrived. We took off our black shawls, folded them, and placed them on our satchels arranged against the wall. Borrowed tables were

set up, with Father McDonnell, Mother Euphrasie, Sister Basilissa, Sister Joseph Marie, and me at one table, and the rest of the Sisters at the other.

Sister Basilissa asked at the end of the meal if we might see the church. The pastor agreed at once, welcoming the relief from monotony. She then asked if we might see the school. The pastor seemed surprised. "Did you see the prairie grass cut down, and the four stakes in the ground? That is the site of the school."

On Sister's asking if school would open in September, he replied, "It will be ready." And so it was also, but in a way very different from other openings of schools. We looked at each other in amazement, as it was then August 18.

The next day the mattresses and other furniture arrived, and a homelike feeling took hold. An abridged account of the first days of school follows. Mother Euphrasie announced the various posts: Sister Basilissa Heiner was to be the superior, and with her were Sisters Joseph Marie Walsh, Mary Marcella Werner, Catherine Carr, and Marion Cecile Spencer, the music teacher, as a large enrollment in music was expected. Sister Basilissa herself was to teach. Sister Dominica Mahoney and Sister Mary Cajetan Foley were to go to Our Lady of Sorrows School as soon as living quarters were ready for them.

By the opening day, one story of the school was completed. The space was intended to be an assembly hall, and the schoolrooms were to be on the second floor as soon as the carpenters finished. In the meantime, school was begun in the assembly hall. The desks of various heights ordered by Father McDonnell had arrived and were placed in orderly rows. The first row was for boys of grades 7 and 8; the second, for grades 4 to 6; and the third, for grades, 1, 2, and 3. A narrow aisle separated the rows of boys, and a wider aisle set the limits for the girls. Their desks were arranged on the opposite side of the hall in similar formation to those of the boys. The policy of no coeducation was begun in this set-up, and continued through the lifetime of the school, eventually culminating in a separate school for boys on Madison Street, and one for girls on Washington Boulevard. A tentative attempt was begun a little later to develop high school work with the eighth grade girls, but this was discontinued. The characteristic ambition was to make the school a well-formed parochial school.

But to return to the opening days. The noise overhead was deafening as the men continued hammering. The cutting of the floor boards above

sent a rain of sawdust down on Sisters and pupils, on the books, in the eyes, and on the starched caps of the Sisters. Each child was called singly, to read and to show his assigned work for criticism, a necessary reverting to the ancient methods used by schoolteachers before St. John Baptist de la Salle introduced class instruction. A satisfactory number of pupils wanted piano lessons; consequently, Sister Marion Cecile had her piano in one corner of the hall, and the "one-and-two-and" went on incessantly.

There were two hundred and ten pupils the first day, and the school was a busy place. This new venture aroused considerable opposition, as the nearby Tilden School closed five rooms when the Catholic pupils withdrew. By the second year, 1887, the Sisters conducted a public examination of their pupils. The children had been moved to the rooms on the second floor, completed at last, but were told to bring slates, pencils, and books to the assembly hall, and take places on the chairs there. A Sister, in charge of each group, asked questions, and the children answered in turn. One of the disgruntled public school teachers said the answers were too cut and dried. The Sister then offered the visitor the textbooks and invited her to put the questions, but the visitor would not do so. The Jesuit Fathers lent encouragement by coming and sitting through the examination and praising the work done.

As for parish endeavors, the future of the parish lay in Father McDonnell's hands. He was blessed with foresight and adaptability, and in meeting the rapid growth of his parish, he, like the nautilus, was constantly mindful of pressure, finding the school, the church, and the rectory steadily outgrowing themselves, and needing more stately mansions for expansion. From the south and west, new families came into the parish. St. Philip's Church was too small to accommodate them, and even though the assembly room of the school was used for Sunday Mass, the problem of a new and larger church presented itself. In 1895 the basement of the present church on 43rd and Washington Boulevard was built and blessed under the name of Saint Mel. The new church and the parish were placed under the patronage of Saint Mel, and were henceforth to be known under that name by diocesan decree.

A new and larger school was likewise a necessity. On September 3, 1907, the school was opened with provision made for thirteen hundred pupils. By 1911, there were eleven hundred children in attendance. The increase in faculty made a new and ampler convent necessary.

Begun in 1908, it was soon erected, and the pastor could say with pardonable pride that it was the first convent in Chicago with a separate room for each Sister.

Our Lady of Sorrows School and Providence Academy

Sister Mary Cajetan Foley and Sister Dominica Mahoney were anxious to begin their work at Our Lady of Sorrows School. The school was being built by Reverend Andrew Venturi, O.S.M., the pastor, but until its completion the Sisters lived at St. Philip's. The needs of the children of the parish had been met through the work of some young women, notably Miss Margaret Carroll and her sister who taught in a few rooms of a store at 2743 Adams Street, and in a later location on West Madison Street. The pupils numbered about fifty. The young women were glad to turn over their work to the Sisters of Providence as soon as they came.²¹

Getting to Our Lady of Sorrows School from St. Philip's was often a complicated process. Sometimes the Sisters walked to the car line through the prairie, beating off the goats and geese that attacked them; sometimes they made the trip in a mule-drawn cart when the weather was too inclement to go on foot. The mule suffered from bouts of temperament, standing immovable at times, and impervious to all attempts to get it into action. The Sisters were due in the school by eight o'clock, but when the mule and the weather were involved, they seldom made it before nine. There were other days when the trip was made to the car line in wet and stormy weather. The dampness reduced the Sisters' starched caps to limp cloth. In this emergency, the mother of Sister St. Alexis, Mrs. Gillis, who lived opposite the church, came to their rescue and re-ironed the caps.²²

In September, 1887, the parish school built by Reverend Andrew Venturi, O.S.M., at a cost of forty thousand dollars, was ready. The cost of the four-story brick building seemed extravagant and the structure too large, to the parishioners who viewed it with incredulous wonder. Reverend Austin Morini, O.S.M., in charge of Servite affairs in America, and Father Venturi, the pastor of Our Lady of Sorrows, "welcomed the seven Sisters and their superior, Sister Mary Celestia Filcer, most heartily." The seven Sisters with her were: Sisters Mary Cajetan Foley, Dominica Mahoney, St. Alice Barrett, Mary Assisi O'Connor, Mary Euphrasie Heitz, Angelina Mackin, Mary

Evangelista Kisling. Rooms were set aside for their living quarters in the parish school.²³

There were one hundred and fifty pupils enrolled, nine of whom were ready to begin high school work. Each succeeding year found an increase of pupils and a corresponding enlargement of the faculty. These Servite Fathers had a vision of the future and the courage to follow that vision. The rooms used as a convent by the Sisters were soon needed for the expanding enrollment of boys and girls. The Servite Fathers had great hopes of the boys as future priests or as fine Catholic laymen; and the Sisters saw in their girls future Sisters, laywomen prominent in public education, and mothers of Catholic families.

In 1892, a three-story brick convent was erected for the Sisters, but soon the overcrowded school demanded more room. By 1897 there were twenty Sisters in the building which housed the Sisters teaching in the parish school and also the high school teachers. Room had to be provided for the teaching of music and art classes for both schools. Expansion was a necessity.²⁴

In the immediate vicinity on the corner of Van Buren Street and Albany Avenue, was a large five-story building, plain and Italianate in style, which had been erected about 1877. When first built, it stood alone on the ten-acre plot of prairie land, bounded by the newly-indicated Albany, Van Buren, Kedzie, and Congress streets. Conducted by the Servite Sisters, headed by Mother Frances (Elizabeth Coolan), the institution was represented as being a convent, novitiate, an academy, and an orphanage. As the suburbs in all directions were united with Chicago, the building became located in a developing area, property values rose, and the title of ownership of the Servite convent was in question.

Mother Frances claimed she held the title in her own name by right of purchase from funds furnished her by her relatives in Ireland. Pressure to adjust the title properly was put on Mother Frances, Sister Gertrude Coolan, and other Sisters, but the Servite Sisters made no response. It is a rule and law of the Catholic Church that all property used for religious purposes should be held in the corporate name of the religious community, or in the name of the Bishop of the diocese, in order to protect those persons who give money for the charitable works sponsored by the Community. Contributions had been given for these aims, and postulants had been accepted for training. Parents and guardians

who had permitted their daughters or wards to enter the novitiate were asking about the training of the future Sisters, their reception and profession of vows, but no satisfactory answers were available. Money given and accepted for the good works mentioned above constitute a public trust, and a public reckoning should be made.

When the Most Reverend Patrick A. Feehan was appointed first Archbishop of Chicago in 1880, he was faced with this problem. He tried to show Mother Frances what should be done, but she maintained that she owned the property. His duty as Archbishop required that he investigate all the complaints made by the parents or guardians of the candidates who had been admitted for religious training, and also the questions regarding ownership, and disposition of contributions. Finding he could not secure a peaceful adjustment of affairs, he brought suit through the Superior Court against Mother Frances.²⁵

Contention and bitterness resulted from the controversy. Internal discord arose among the Sisters, many of whom could see no future for themselves in the uneasy situation. The Archbishop, in bringing suit, did not claim ownership of the property, but asked for settlement of the title, the protection of donors, and the security of the religious life of the Sisters.

The case was decided in favor of the Archbishop who then excommunicated Mother Frances and the rebellious faction which would not yield. Final details comprised reference to Rome to determine the status of the Servite Sisters. Dissolution of the Servite Sisters of this foundation as a community followed. Other Servite Sisters made foundations in the United States, but none of them are continuances of the Van Buren Street community, and none have any relation to it.

Permission was given to the non-involved members to withdraw and transfer to other communities, and for the sale of the Van Buren Street property, the title to which was still held by Mother Frances Coolan, but with the restriction of any attempt to conduct it as a convent under the Servite Sisters.

Mother Frances did not want to sell to a religious community, but there were few other offers advanced. The building was not adaptable for many purposes. Finally, the Sisters of Providence bought it on November 2, 1897, through the agency of Mr. J. C. Foley, brother of Mother Mary Cleophas Foley, then Superior General. The first purchase included the building, the stable, and the ground on which the said buildings stood, and the graveyard in which a few Servite Sisters

were buried. The open European-style vaults were ordered removed, the bodies disinterred and reburied in Catholic cemeteries, and the ground cleared. The second purchase was a tract of sixty feet on Albany Avenue, as soon as the mortgage had been removed. The total purchase, amounting to sixty thousand dollars, was concluded on October 15, 1898.²⁶

The purchase price was only the major portion of the expense involved. Some of the Sisters of Providence labored with other workers to clean the building which was left in an indescribable condition. Necessary repairs were involved, and also the refurnishing of school-rooms, music and art studios, and the simple and plain apartments of the Sisters of Providence.

The Servite Convent had been referred to as Seven Dolors Academy, but the new incumbents renamed it Our Lady of Providence Academy and put it under Our Lady's protection. In September, 1898, twenty-six Sisters, comprising the teachers of the parochial school and the Academy, took up their abode in the roomy building, with Sister Mary Gabriel Brady as superior of the entire group.²⁷ "Roomy" was a false word. By 1907, the crowded condition of the combined convent and high school demanded more room. An addition was built on the south side at a cost of twenty-five thousand dollars. This structure, rising to the third floor, provided a chapel large enough for the combined household, more sleeping rooms, and several classrooms.²⁸

The statistical record of 1914 in the Providence House Book of that year gives the number of parochial pupils as sixteen hundred and fifty-two, and that of the high school as five hundred, including a small number of private and kindergarten pupils. Sister Francis Borgia Brophy succeeded to the post of superior of the combined household with sixty-five Sisters under her care. Sister Mary Emerita Brophy remained in charge of the work of the parish school.

Our Lady of Providence Academy had graduated one hundred and ninety-six young women between 1891 and 1912. The hopes of the Sisters were realized. In the course of a few years, one hundred and twenty-six had married, thirty had entered the religious life: twenty-four as Sisters of Providence, one as a Visitation Sister, two as Servite Sisters, one as a Dominican, one as a Poor Clare, and one as a Sister of Charity BVM. The remaining forty did not marry, most of them being public school teachers or stenographers.²⁹

St. Joseph's, Hammond

Reverend Henry M. Plaster applied to the Sisters of Providence for Sisters to teach in his school at Covington, Indiana. Before the matter was decided by the Sisters, Father Plaster found himself transferred to St. Joseph's, Hammond. He withdrew his offer for Covington, and asked the Sisters to help him set up a new school in Hammond, the first Catholic school in the town. Mother Euphrasie agreed to make the change. On August 27, 1886, four Sisters took up their residence in a cottage on South Hohman Street. The Sisters appointed were: Sisters Clementine Zimmerman, superior; Mary Michael Byrne, Mary Ann Quinn, and Mary Lewis Nachtweih.

The building in which the school opened was a small two-room frame building, but during the second half of the year, a new school-church combination was erected to care for the eighty-five pupils who came on the opening day. On the closing day of the first year, the number of pupils had increased to one hundred and fifty, nine of whom were registered for music.³⁰

Schools in northwestern Indiana, now the Gary diocese, opened too late to be included in this volume which has a wavering closing line of 1894. They will receive adequate treatment under Mother Mary Cleophas' administration which is just beginning in this book. Their dates are: St. Joseph's school, 1886, and All Saints, 1898, Hammond; Sacred Heart, Whiting, 1895; St. Mary's, East Chicago, Indiana, 1900; St. John the Baptist, Whiting, 1901.

NOTES — CHAPTER XXI

1. *Alumnae Class Lists, St. Mary-of-the-Woods Institute*, Class 1898.
2. "Hell Gate," *Encyclopedia Americana* (New York, Chicago: Americana Corporation, 1944), 20, 291.
3. Mrs. Anna Newton to Sister Mary Ambrose, June, 1885. Newton File. S.M.W.A.
4. *Souvenir of Golden Jubilee of Saint Mary's Academic Institute* (New York, Chicago: Benziger Brothers, 1891), p. 83.
5. Rev. Herman Alerding, *History of Fort Wayne Diocese*, p. 326; also, *Acts of the Council, 1880-1914*, p. 41.
6. Book of the Foundations, "Greencastle," p. 58. S.M.W.A.
7. *Greencastle Banner*, September 8, 1881. DePauw University Library.
8. Rev. C. J. Mougin, *Memoirs*, p. 2. Typescript. S.M.W.A.
9. Charles Blanchard, *History of Catholicity in Indiana*, p. 290.

10. Acts of the Council, 1880-1914, p. 40.
11. Information furnished by Librarian of DePauw University. Clipping File, 1886-1887.
12. Mougin, Memoirs, p. 12. Typescript.
13. Contracts in Greencastle File. S.M.W.A.
14. Correspondence concerning reopening of St. Paul Academy in 1915. S.M.W.A.
15. Report on Income and Expenses, 1915-1922. Treasury File "Greencastle." S.M.W.A.
16. City and State Card File of Sisters of Providence. S.M.W.A.
17. Notes from Reverend William Stineman, present pastor at Greencastle.
18. Souvenir of Solemn Dedication of St. Mel's Church, November 26, 1911. S.M.W.A.
19. Book of the Foundations, "St. Philip's," p. 54.
20. Facts supplied from Souvenir of Solemn Dedication of St. Mel's. S.M.W.A.
21. Diamond Jubilee Brochure of Our Lady of Sorrows Parish, 1949.
22. Reminiscences of Sister Mary Marcella Werner. Typescript. S.M.W.A.
23. Book of the Foundations, "Seven Dolors, Chicago," p. 56.
24. Expansion in Obedience List of 1897.
25. An article in the *Chicago Tribune* of November 9, 1897, page 5, column 3, gives the details of the lawsuit and the cause. S.M.W.A.
26. Book of Important Events, 1890-1914, p. 110. S.M.W.A.
27. House Record of Our Lady of Providence Academy, September, 1898.
28. *Ibid.*, September, 1907.
29. Alumnae List of Our Lady of Providence Academy for 1891-1912.

CHAPTER XXII

Encouragement from Rome. Western Appeals Widen Our Horizon.

New Schools: Sacred Heart, Kansas City; St. Agnes, South Omaha.

The years 1886-1889 were crowded with events. Many things demanded attention: the Community elections of 1886 were drawing near, and the project of beginning the long-desired Church of the Immaculate Conception was imminent. At last the hoped-for Decree of Praise arrived.

The Community Elections of 1886

The first matter deemed to be imperative, and one which could not be delayed indefinitely, was the Community elections. Mother Euphrasie's triennial term of office would expire in August, 1886. The General Council was composed of at least twenty Sisters according to the diocesan Rule approved in 1870. It met on August 5 and 6 in the presence of the Bishop to hear the reports on the temporalities of the Community, pass on the acceptance or rejection of novices for profession, and on the Sisters for final profession. Not the least of the duties of the General Council was the selection of the officers of the Community. The results of this latter action showed Mother Euphrasie elected for a second triennial term with the following Assistants: Sister Mary Cleophas Foley, First Assistant, replacing Sister Mary Stanislaus Hayes; Sister Mary Ursula Fearn, Second Assistant; Sister Mary Ambrose O'Donald, Secretary-Treasurer; Sister Mary Carmel O'Farrell, Third Assistant and Econome; Sister Ignatia O'Connor, Mistress of Novices. Sister Ignatia was granted a dispensation by Bishop Chatard as she was only two years professed under temporary vows, and the old Rule required five years. No dispensations were given for relationship among the delegates or Council members as none were needed. Three names were proposed for each position.¹ When the revised Rule would finally appear, the Sisters would follow the new directives under the Bishop's interpretation.

The Laying of the Cornerstone of the Church

Before this ceremony could take place, preparations to clear the proposed site of the church involved the moving of the utility buildings, and also the small frame and brick chapel built in 1862 by Mother Mary Cecilia. Beautiful oak, walnut, and maple trees had to be cut down to enlarge the ground area which the dimensions of the new church required. The wooden walk with its protective cover, connecting Providence and the Institute, had to be torn down. The first consignment of foundation stones arrived on March 18, 1886. St. Gabriel's Day.

On March 25, the moving of the recently-built bakery, the pharmacy, and the men's house was completed, and the new equipment installed in the bakery. The transfer to the northeast was accomplished without great difficulty. The moving of the chapel took a longer time, the statuette of St. Joseph which Mother Theodore had brought from France, riding safely in the confessional to protect God's House. The Providence of 1853 was not as large a structure as the present Providence. There was plenty of space around it on the west side, to permit the safe movement of the chapel to the southwest. The whole moving operation occupied forty days, and during that time, the Community Room in Providence was used as a chapel. After the small chapel was safely moved, a perfect opportunity for house-cleaning presented itself: with walls to be repainted, floors polished, windows repaired, and everything put in order. In a letter to Mme. de la Corbinière on June 8, 1886, Mother Euphrasie described the process of moving, expressing her admiration at man's ingenuity which could accomplish safely such a perilous work. She compared the movement of the buildings on rollers to the majestic progress of the steamers on the inland rivers.

Another happy part of the letter was the information dealing with plans for the new church. Mother wrote that the style chosen was Romanesque; the length, 180 feet; height, 50 feet; width of the nave, 64 feet; width at the transepts, 84 feet; tower, 150 feet. No dimensions were given for the sanctuary, but later on, further enlargement of the plan would be necessary.²

March 25, 1886, the feast of the Annunciation, had a special attraction for many of the Sisters; every one of Our Lady's feasts meant something to them, but this feast had a minor note. It was the date of the withdrawal of the Annunciation from its former rank as a holy day of

obligation in the United States, following Corpus Christi and the Epiphany, both lately removed from the ordo.³

September 14, 1886, the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, had been chosen for the laying of the cornerstone. Bishop Chatard arrived in the morning to arrange all the documents, lists of participants, newspaper clippings, coins, and all pertinent information to be placed in the copper box prepared by Mr. Bohlen for insertion in the stone. At four o'clock in the afternoon, the Bishop, vested in cope and mitre, and attended by twelve priests wearing surplices, followed the procession of cross bearer, students and Sisters, novices and postulants to the northwest corner of the foundation. After the ceremony of the laying of the stone, the chanting of some Psalms, and the Litany of the Saints, the Bishop was conducted to a platform erected between two beautiful trees. The priests took their places in armchairs placed on the platform, and the Bishop gave a short address, dwelling on the symbolism of the occasion. The pleasant air was windy and not too warm. Very few visitors were present, as not many invitations were sent out, reserving the summoning of a general audience until later occasions.⁴

Sisters have often asked about the exact location of the cornerstone as no stone is now visible. It is covered over by masonry necessary to build the hall near the Exposition Chapel. Sister Agnes Clare Cassidy, Sister Geraldine Mullen, and Sister Catherine Marie Daly pointed out the location. All three were in the novitiate at the time of the dedication, and took part in the procession.

The Decree of Praise

Progress toward the approval of the Rule had advanced under Bishop Chatard. Laudatory letters had been filed during Mother Mary Ephrem's administration (1874-1883), from bishops and clerical friends familiar with the work of the Community. The circle of friends continually widened with the expansion of the work of the Sisters in Michigan and Illinois, and new requests for Sisters in Nebraska and Missouri.

Knowing that the opposition to the approval could not continue indefinitely, Bishop Chatard had the necessary documents prepared early, showing the complete independence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods from Ruillé, and an annotated copy of the Rules, showing the difference between the French and American Rules. He had advised

translation of the Rules into Latin for the convenience of the Sacred Congregation, and a complete statement of the debts and assets of the Community.⁵

The preliminary work alarmed some of the Bishops regarding the status of the Ordinary of Indianapolis under the revision. Bishop Chatard gave Mother Euphrasie advice on dealing with this question when it arose. He stated that his own jurisdiction would be reserved to the Motherhouse as specified in Canon Law.⁶

Rev. Edward A. Higgins, S.J., a retreat master at times at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, had many contacts in Rome, especially with Cardinals Jacobina and Mazzela. He sent word from time to time on the progress of the approval.⁷ He met with Sister Mary Cleophas and Sister Mary Ambrose in Cincinnati on his return from Rome early in 1886. He encouraged them by pointing out changes which they might work on in advance of approval which seemed to him to be imminent. Finally, Bishop Chatard, on May 24, 1887, cabled from Rome for the revised copy of the Rule to be sent to him. Bishop Chatard's health had been so uncertain that he had gone to Rome on February 13, 1887, in order to secure the benefit of the mild Roman spring. On June 24, 1887, his letter brought the good news that the approval had been granted on First Friday, June 3, 1887.

On June 25, the next day after the arrival of the Bishop's letter, photographs of Camillus Cardinal Mazzela, the Jesuit Cardinal, sent by Father Higgins, arrived.⁸ Father Higgins was very much pleased that the Jesuit Cardinal had presided over the Committee of Cardinals which passed favorable judgment of the decree of praise. However joyful the occasion of the news of the first steps of approval could be, it was not until Commencement was over that Mother Euphrasie sent the special circular to the missions. Mother Euphrasie's letter gives the content of Bishop Chatard's message, noting that much still had to be discussed and explained at the Bishop's arrival. Mother states that a High Mass of thanksgiving would be celebrated at St. Mary's on Friday, July 1, in gratitude for the favor. She quotes part of the Bishop's letter:

"At last your earnest desire is fulfilled, and the prayers of the Community have been answered. After a careful examination, the Commission appointed by the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda gave a favorable opinion with regard to the Constitutions of the Sisters of Providence of St. Mary-of-the-Woods and re-



THE MOST REVERED

Enthroned in the heart of

commended their approbation on trial. The opinion and recommendation were referred to the Sovereign Pontiff for his sanction, if he thought proper to give it, and on May 26, our Most Holy Father gave his formal approval, and ordered the Decree of Approbation to be issued. This decree bearing the date of June 3, 1887, was duly issued and is now in my [the Bishop's] possession. I congratulate you and the Sisters on this happy event, and unite with them in thanking God who has crowned their fidelity to Him.⁹

When the revised Constitutions arrived, Mother and the Council studied them carefully, and following the advice of the Bishop, prepared for an election under the new regulations. The new General Chapter was to be drawn up at once. Mother notified the Community:

All Local Superiors on whose mission there are at least seven Sisters are members of the General Chapter. These, including members of the Particular Council, number twenty-nine, and there must be an equal number elected. These are selected from those choir Sisters, either private Sisters, or at the head of small establishments, who have made Perpetual Vows. They have been divided into twenty-nine sections, each section having three electors and ten voters. The names of the electors of your section are enclosed to you. Draw a heavy stroke over the two names you reject, and leave untouched the one whom you wish to elect. Enclose [the ballot] in the small envelope, seal and return the envelope immediately. The elector who has the majority of votes in each section is, of course, elected.¹⁰

Bishop Chatard arrived on August 2, and on August 3 met the Council, opened and examined the billets. About two hours' time was consumed in examining the billets from the twenty-nine sections. At four o'clock, he assembled the General Chapter. The next day, the reception of the Bishop after his long absence was set at six o'clock in the evening, following the order of the *Pontificale*. The Bishop addressed the whole Community on the importance of the decree. Rev. August Riehle, pastor of the village church, assisting Rev. John Guéguen, the chaplain, then read the decree, first in Latin, then in English. Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament closed the ceremony.¹¹

The General Chapter, which met in session the next day, August 5, at two o'clock for the elections, numbered fifty-eight delegates —

twenty-nine by right and twenty-nine by election. Those by right included three former superior-generals: Mother Mary Cecilia, superior at St. Ann's Orphanage; Mother Mary Ephrem, superior at St. Joseph, Galesburg; and Mother Anastasie, superior at the Institute. The revised Constitutions specified forty years of age for the Superior-General, thirty-five for each assistant, and at least two years professed under perpetual vows for all. Mother Euphrasie herself had an age deficiency of one and one-half months as she was not yet forty years old; Sister Mary Carmel O'Farrell, the econome, lacked two years of the required age of thirty-five. In his capacity of Apostolic Delegate, Bishop Chatard gave a dispensation for these deficiencies. Sister Ignatia O'Connor, who had been elected the previous year as Mistress of Novices, was not qualified in years of profession, being only two years professed under temporary vows. This impediment could not be dispensed with. The elected officials of 1887 were:

<i>Superior-General</i>	<i>Mother Euphrasie Hinkle</i>
<i>First Assistant</i>	<i>Sister Mary Cleophas Foley</i>
<i>Second Assistant</i>	<i>Sister Mary Ursula Fearn</i>
<i>Econome</i>	<i>Sister Mary Carmel O'Farrell</i>
<i>Fourth Assistant</i>	<i>Sister Mary Albertine Sondermann</i>
<i>Secretary-Treasurer</i>	<i>Sister Mary Ambrose O'Donald</i> ¹²

The Decree of Praise was given by the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda with a proviso of five years of trial to carry out the suggested revisions. The structure of the Constitutions remained about the same. Some new regulations concerned the reception and profession of the postulants and novices. The postulancy was specified as three or four months in length, less elastic than the old Rule which allowed a longer time, if advisable. The novitiate proper was to last two years: the first year to be spent at the motherhouse, the second year in one of the houses on the missions. The white veil was to be worn by the novice while at St. Mary's from vesture to profession.

The vows were not for five years, as formerly, but for three years, followed by an additional five years, if the candidate were approved by the Superiors. The reception and profession ceremonies had, as a rule, been held annually on August 15. The requirements of the revised Rule made it necessary to hold a number of receptions in order to meet the shortened term of the postulancy. Postulants had entered at infrequent intervals, but after June, 1887, all were to be vested at the end of three

months, and then the canonical novitiate was to be begun. Profession of temporary, and also of perpetual vows was ordinarily to be made on August 15. The perpetual vows were to be preceded by eight years of temporary vows. The duty of deciding the acceptance or dismissal of a novice or a Sister was removed from the functions of the General Chapter, and placed in the power of the Superior General and her Assistants.

Omitted in Chapter **VIII** of the 1887 revised Rule was any mention of the necessity of securing the superior's permission before receiving Holy Communion outside of the days specified in the new Rule. The confessor's permission was still retained.

Constitution **XI** on the Profession, in stating that temporary vows were for three years, followed by another temporary period of five years, mentions the return to the motherhouse in the eighth year of the vows for a second novitiate of "a scholastic year of ten months." Chapter **XXXV** of the revised Rule of 1887 explains the purpose and the work to be accomplished in the second novitiate.

The first Thirty Days' Retreat was conducted by Sister Mary Cleophas, then First Assistant. It began on September 1, 1888. Fourteen aspirants (present-day tertians) made the retreat. Mother Mary Cleophas, after her election, gave this retreat yearly, or semi-yearly, as the situation demanded.

Perpetual Vows

Perpetual vows had been taken by individual Sisters through the years with permission of the Bishop. Mother Theodore had pronounced hers in France in August, 1831; Sister St. Francis in 1841, before she left France. After the Decree of Praise had been given to the Rule for St. Mary-of-the-Woods on June 3, 1887, and final approbation on March 12, 1894, perpetual vows were required of all Sisters who wished to remain members of the Community. Vows were ordinarily made during the retreat on August 15. In 1924, a special rescript limited temporary vows to five years, with an extension of one year, and no more, if circumstances required it. Consequently, the time of final profession was dependent on the expiration of temporary vows. These were now limited to five years, instead of the three and five years stipulated by the Rule of 1887. From 1926 on, the ceremony of profession of vows, both temporary and perpetual, was held two or three times a year, dependent on the date of the first profession, usually

in January or August. In the course of time changes have been made. A few of those mentioned pertain to the first quarter-century of the 1900's, but a discussion of the changes made during and after Vatican II, would be inappropriate at this stage of our chronicle.

Assumption Ceremonies of 1887

Previous to the arrival of the revised Rule, Mother Euphrasie and her Council had studied the preparation and dispositions of the Sisters, novices, and postulants, who were to take part in the ceremonies of August 15, 1887, under the stipulations of the old Rule. The Diary gives an account of the day. There were two Jesuit retreat masters present to assist the Bishop. One of them, Reverend Walter A. Hill, said a low Mass at five-thirty o'clock, and at six, the Bishop began Mass. Forty novices made first profession of vows, and thirty-four Sisters pronounced perpetual vows. As all the vows were made individually, seventy-four in all, the Bishop was very fatigued. Nevertheless, he returned at nine o'clock to preside at the High Mass celebrated by Reverend Eugene Brady, S.J.¹³

Father Brady left that afternoon, but Father Hill¹⁴ remained for a few days more to give lectures to the Sisters who were teaching philosophy. On August 16, the Bishop left on the morning train, and was pleased to find himself traveling with a large number of Sisters in one of the chartered coaches en route to Indianapolis.

It became necessary to hold a number of receptions in order to meet the shortened term of the postulancy. On September 8, 1887, twenty-four postulants received the habit and white veil. Similar ceremonies were held on November 30, 1887, February 2, May 1, and August 15, 1888. The total number vested from August 15, 1887, to August 15, 1888, reached one hundred. What a goodly company it was! But it is not surprising that a new Mistress should take hold.

Changes in Novitiate Directors

On Sister Ignatia O'Connor's resignation from direction of the novices, and also from membership in the Council, Sister St. Urban MacGowan was appointed to take charge of the novitiate. She did not assume office, however, as she became very ill, and died on August 6, 1888. Sister Basilissa Heiner was elected as Mistress on December 8,

1888, and also as an additional member of the Council. In the elections of 1890 and 1896, she was re-elected. In 1902 the directing of the novitiate became an appointive office no longer connected with the Council membership. Sister Manetto Quigley was given charge of the novices from 1902 to 1908. Sister Basilissa remained in the Council as supervisor of schools until 1923.

The number of receptions became fewer in the course of the following year, 1889, until the time of entrance for postulants was stabilized, usually May 15 for the August reception, September 8 for December 8, December 10 for March 19. After the revision under Canon Law of 1918-1928, admission and reception took place twice a year, and first professions in January and August.

Correspondence with the Le Fer Family

Extensive and affectionate exchange of letters had always been carried on between the Superiors and Sisters of the Community and the Le Fer family, one of the most active members being Mme. Clémentine de la Corbinière. Clémentine, gifted with a talent for writing, had published in France *Une Femme Apôtre*, a biography of Sister St. Francis Xavier, in 1879, which had been very successful, running through several editions in 1880. Following this was the publication of *L'Indiana* in 1886, five years after Sister Mary Joseph's death. *L'Indiana* contained many references to Sister Mary Joseph, but was rather sketchy. Mme. de la Corbinière wished it to be developed into an extensive biography, comparable to *Une Femme Apôtre*, which was now well known in Europe.

Mother Euphrasie discouraged the idea, while at the same time stressing the great blessings that had come to Indiana through Sister Mary Joseph. Mother pointed out that this was not the time for publishing a biography. The only condition which Sister Mary Joseph had stipulated when she herself translated *Une Femme Apôtre* into English was that Mother Euphrasie, then a private Sister, supervise the translation. Mother did so, but the work was indeed a labor, occupying an entire year. Mother Euphrasie, having accepted the duty of Superior-General in 1883, felt that she could not supervise another translation. In addition, she maintained that any biography should be much more extensive. It should include the letters, of which there were at least two hundred available. Mother maintained that the small

volume, *L'Indiana*, had been done too hurriedly. She felt that the work of Sister Mary Joseph in propagating good Catholic magazines, such as *Ave Maria*, and the *Messenger of the Sacred Heart*, had not been sufficiently appreciated.

The most important reason of all, and one which would preclude the publication, was the recent appearance in 1883 of the *History of the Diocese of Vincennes*, and the preparation of the *History of the Diocese of Fort Wayne*, both by Reverend Herman J. Alerding, and ordered by Bishop Chatard. It would be quite impossible to bring out two books, bearing closely related titles, and both dealing with the growth and progress of the parish schools in Indiana.¹⁵

Mme. de la Corbinière's *L'Indiana* was never fully translated into English, but portions of Part II, translated by a group of college Sisters and students, appeared as a small brochure giving many facts of Sister Mary Joseph's life and vocation.

Invading the Western Frontier

Requests came from Missouri and Nebraska, asking for Sisters. Of the many appeals, Mother Euphrasie decided that Sisters could be sent to two of them by September, 1889. These two requests came in about the same time, one from Kansas City, Missouri, and the other from South Omaha, Nebraska. These will be treated singly as to their introduction and progress.

Reverend Michael J. O'Dwyer of Sacred Heart Parish, Kansas City, Missouri, wrote that he was building a church, and that he had a school, no Sisters, and a promising parish. Mother could not comply at once, but the opportune closing of the school at Lemont, Illinois, made it possible for her to send a colony of Sisters by January 9, 1889. The band consisted of Sister Mary Cyril Kilroy, superior; Sisters Mary Theodosia Mug, Mary de Sales Farrell, St. Matthew McNamara, Agnes Clare Cassidy, St. Clotilde Garvey, Irma Cecile Riley, music, and Ann Augustine Malloy, housekeeper.¹⁶

The Sisters made the trip from St. Mary's on the Vandalia line, arriving in Kansas City on the morning of January 9, 1889. They were met by Father O'Dwyer and taken to their destination by street car, a ride of nineteen blocks into the valley. The situation was not quite what they expected, as Father O'Dwyer's realizations lay in the future, and not exactly in the present. Father O'Dwyer and his housekeeper oc-

cupied the house built for the convent and school, and they expected to remain there. After some discussion and correspondence on the matter, Mother Euphrasie, remaining firm on the privacy of the Sisters, suggested that the parlor be set aside as an office for Father O'Dwyer's use, and that the Sisters serve his breakfast there when he said Mass for them in the convent.

Sacred Heart School opened with two hundred children enrolled. Terms of the contract were then settled as time did not permit the exchange of letters earlier. The Sisters were each to receive twenty dollars a month, tuition was to be collected by the Sisters and turned over to the pastor to pay for repairs and maintenance. Music fees were to be retained by the Sisters.¹⁷ Mother Euphrasie purchased a piano from Mr. Küssner in Terre Haute and had it shipped on January 14, 1889.¹⁸ Mr. Küssner tried to interest her in a new model, a cycloid piano, with a semi-circular keyboard which did not require the armstretch necessary for younger children, but Mother Euphrasie did not care to introduce novelties in a newly-opened school.

The arrangements for the school were endorsed by Bishop John J. Hogan, Bishop of Kansas City since 1880, and administrator of the diocese of St. Joseph, Missouri. He gave full permission and expressed himself to Father O'Dwyer as happy to welcome the Sisters.¹⁹

The combination convent and school was a well-built building, four stories high. The school had one hundred single desks, and fifty double desks, and a teacher's desk in each schoolroom. Space for a music room was provided. The church was an old frame workshop. Father O'Dwyer wanted to build a brick church, but could not do so until his parish was well established. The problem of the teaching of boys by the Sisters inevitably arose. It was clear that a refusal to teach them might injure the goodwill now prevailing in the parish. The Sisters agreed to teach the boys above the third grade until other arrangements could be made; perhaps lay teachers could be secured by the pastor. Before the end of 1889, the enrollment had risen close to four hundred. Of this number, there were some Indian children in every room. The pastor began Americanization in earnest during the second year. The Indian children were to wear American clothes, not a difficult change for the Indian girls, but hard on the boys. They were cramped enough by being restrained indoors, and found that to give up the tribal blanket, limited their freedom. Each boy was furnished with two suits of clothes, two hats, two pairs of shoes, one set for everyday wear, and one for

Sunday. One Sister, in her *Reminiscences*,²⁰ said she asked the pastor to allow the boys to remove their shoes during study period, but they were to wear them at class, recess, and assemblies. After the boys left the school grounds, they took off the shoes and carried them home.

At first the Sisters could not get the Indian women to come to church as they were very bashful; but Sister Mary Elise Reno, an additional teacher who came to teach the older boys, interested the boys in giving a program for their mothers. She taught them hymns and patriotic songs, and formed a choir to sing at Mass. When the Indian women heard of it, they came to church to listen to the children. Before long, they were learning hymns and singing at Mass. As the narrator said: "The mothers came to hear the boys sing, but at least they were at Mass."

Before the Sisters arrived, they had heard of the eloquent young priest stationed in Kansas City in 1887, but they never met him during their stay there. He had been sent to Rome to study, and years after, as individuals, they met him as Bishop John J. Glennon of St. Louis.

News had reached Kansas City of the destruction by fire of the motherhouse at St. Mary's. There was no homecoming the summer of 1889 or 1890. The Sisters did not comprehend on hearing the news, the full import of the disaster and how much it would affect their happy life in Kansas City. They remained there only five years.

The last days at Sacred Heart Parish were sad ones. Father O'Dwyer did not receive the help he had anticipated. He mortgaged the convent and school, and in 1893 he was not able to redeem his obligation. In a poor frontier parish there was no one able to help him. He asked Mother Mary Cleophas to buy the school so that he could redeem the mortgage, but she could not do so. The destruction of the motherhouse made it necessary to build another home for the Sisters. All building operations at Saint Mary's on the church and the Academy had to be suspended. Mother Mary Cleophas explained that she had borrowed all the money that Canon Law would permit, and she could not borrow any more.

The Sisters of Loretto of St. Joseph, Missouri, answered the appeal of Father O'Dwyer. They had no debt, and could buy the school from the pastor and teach in the school. Mother Mary Cleophas, then in office, wrote them, encouraging them to buy the property from the pastor, and expressed her good will. She spoke of the excellent pastor to whom the Sisters of Providence were greatly attached. She regretted

that the Community could not keep the school that the Sisters loved so very much.

The parish, white and Indian members, saw the Sisters go in June, 1894, and thus our school at Kansas City, Missouri, closed amid tears.

Saint Agnes School, South Omaha

Urgent requests had been received inviting Mother Euphrasie to send Sisters to Nebraska as well as to Missouri. Letters from the pastors at North Platte, McCook, and other Nebraska settlements had to be met with the customary regret, "Oh, if we had more Sisters!" Finally the letter of Reverend Daniel W. Moriarty of St. Bridget's parish, South Omaha, seemed to hold out possibilities for growth. Father Moriarty asked that Sisters be sent to see the place and judge of its suitability. On November 11, 1888, Sister Mary Albertine Sondermann and Mother Anastasie Brown, both experienced Sisters, left on the Vandalia Line on Sunday afternoon at two o'clock. They were scheduled to arrive in South Omaha on Tuesday, November 13, at noon. By traveling on Sunday afternoon, they were given a free ride to St. Louis by the conductor, a concession often made to Sisters.

In general, the prospects seemed good for a promising school. The pastor was living in a small cottage which served as a rectory, but plans were being made for the erection of a combination church and school. A small house was to be rented as a convent. On their return to St. Mary's, the two Sisters gave a favorable report, and the mission was accepted for August 1889. The contract drawn up with Father Moriarty by the Sisters provided for the care of their spiritual welfare, school duties, teaching hours, care of the altar, but not care of the church. It also carried the clause, common to all contracts of the Sisters of Providence, that no child should be refused because it could not pay. There still remained to be secured the sanction of Rt. Rev. Bishop James O'Connor of Omaha.

While affairs were still pending, Rt. Rev. Bishop Thomas A. Bonacum, the Ordinary of the newly-erected Diocese of Lincoln, Nebraska, called at St. Mary's to ask for Sisters for his diocese, and in particular for Beatrice, Nebraska. The Omaha affair was still not decided, and therefore no answer could be given to His Excellency.²¹

Bishop O'Connor's letter of invitation and sanction came promptly. He had read the contract and found it quite satisfactory. He added one

restriction, not mentioned before, and certainly not expected. The Sisters were to conduct a day school, but might not take boarding students. The Bishop explained that he had promised the Religious of the Sacred Heart not to allow any other Community to accept boarding students until the Religious of the Sacred Heart had paid back the money advanced by the diocese for their foundation in Omaha. This would require ten or twelve years.²² The Sisters of Providence accepted the decision. After all, ten or twelve years would pass.

Events were moving rapidly on the frontier. The colony of Sisters was promised for August, 1889, and in the meantime preparations were being made on both sides. Father Moriarty's early letters were written on St. Bridget's Parish stationery, but later letters came from St. Agnes Church. Father Moriarty had charge of both parishes, but seeing that the Catholics were settling away from St. Bridget's and toward St. Agnes Church in the packing-house district, he made St. Agnes the principal church and St. Bridget's a chapel of ease. The combination church and school was to be located in St. Agnes Parish.²³ The erection of the new diocese of Lincoln had diminished the number of people in the Omaha diocese. According to Father Moriarty, the new diocese withdrew 150 families from his parish.²⁴

The group selected for the Omaha mission was headed by Sister Mary Cajetan Foley, and with her were: Sisters Clementina Gallagher, Mary Berchmans Schaefer, Joseph Glaum, Mary Basil Pendergast, and Monica Miner. They arrived in August, opening school with 140 pupils. Sister Manetto Quigley and Sister Natalie Hurtubise joined them in October, but in January, 1890, Sister Manetto was transferred to Sacred Heart School, Kansas City.

The restriction on taking boarders occasioned a serious deficit in the revenue of the Sisters. There were many girls living just outside South Omaha who could have come to school as boarders, but could not do so otherwise, on account of the distances involved. The day pupils, ranging in age from four to fourteen years, had to walk the long stretch through the open country from their homes to the school. The Sisters also had to make the long trip from St. Bridget's convent to St. Agnes School twice a day.

Bishop O'Connor died on May 27, 1890, and was succeeded by Bishop Richard Scannell in 1891. The prohibition against taking boarders was continued, following the stipulation made by Bishop O'Connor. Father Casper's narrative, from the scanty facts available to

him, sums up the work of the Sisters of Providence for the seventeen years of their stay, by stating that they began their labors in 1889, added two years of high school in 1894, five years later discontinued the high school, and withdrew in 1907.²⁵ However, more needs to be said. In 1902 the parochial grade school had four hundred pupils and could take no more as there was no space and no hope of building. Mother Mary Cleophas, with Bishop Chatard's permission, promised to give one thousand dollars to the building fund. Father Moriarty's debt was \$20,000, but the Sisters of Providence could do no more, compelled to build a new motherhouse at St. Mary's, and bogged down by signed contracts for the church and the unfinished Academy building.

Finally, Bishop Scannell told Father Moriarty that if the Sisters of Providence could not buy the building, he should find a community that would do so, as the diocese could do nothing. The ultimatum was issued, and there seemed to be no possibility of an interview, even though the moratorium on boarders had already expired.

The Obedience List for the years between 1889 and 1907, seventeen in all, shows that a steady increase in teachers was provided to meet the demands of the school. From the original group of six Sisters, the number increased to twelve by 1905. Nevertheless, Father Moriarty had to find a buyer and did so — the Sisters of Mercy, debt-free, and spared the disaster and loss which had befallen Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. The transfer was a very amicable one, with kindness on both sides. In June, 1907, the Sisters of Providence left the school that they would always remember with happiness.

Omaha, and particularly the children of St. Agnes School, did not forget the Sisters of Providence. In a few years, some of the girls joined their teachers to become novices. The two Mitchell sisters, Sister Mary Serena and Sister Marie Clare, led the way, followed by Sister Lucy Desmond, all making permanent impressions on the Community by their devotedness.

The lives of other Sisters were indirectly connected with Omaha. In 1893, two Sisters of Providence in the St. Louis station were addressed by a young woman, Miss Mary Mattingly, who asked them what Community they belonged to. They explained that they were Sisters of Providence en route to Omaha. Miss Mattingly, waiting for a train East, told them she was going to Providence Novitiate to be a Sister but had never seen any Sisters of Providence. A missionary priest had recommended that she apply to St. Mary's. As Sister Mary Rosella

Mattingly, she spent forty years in active service, thanking her confessor for his good direction. From 1887 to 1893, General James Miller was the commandant at Fort Omaha. He had arranged for his daughter Anna to remain in the East with friends, modify her irregular education, and then go to St. Mary-of-the-Woods Conservatory to perfect her musical training. She became a Catholic, entered the novitiate in 1890, and as Sister Francis Cecile Miller taught vocal music and delighted the Community with her beautiful voice.

Thus ended for some years our adventures west of the Mississippi. It was not until 1920 that the dramatic voyage to Honan, China, rekindled our desire for far-flung apostolic labors, and gave a token appreciation of Mother Theodore's sacrifice in coming from France to Indiana.

Years later, two native Omahans, Jude and Janet Brockelsby, grandnieces of Sisters Mary Serena and Marie Clare, attended our college. Janet forged a closer tie, becoming Sister Pauline, S.P., in 1960.

NOTES — CHAPTER XXII

1. Record of the Elections, 1886.
2. Community Diary, March 25, 1886.
3. *Ibid.*, September 14, 1886.
4. Mother Euphrasie to Mme. de laCorbinière, June 8, 1886. No. 19 written in English.
5. Bishop Chatard à Sister Mary Joseph Le Fer, November 9, 1880.
6. Bishop Chatard to Mother Euphrasie, August 23, 1883.
7. Reverend Edward Higgins as Procurator of the Missouri Jesuits, was a representative in the Council of Procurators in Rome in 1886 and later, in the general congregation in 1892 in Loyola, Spain. Gilbert J. Garraghan, *Jesuits of the Middle United States*, III, 425-26.
8. Now in special collection of photographs. S.M.W.A.
9. Mother Euphrasie to the Sisters, June 28, 1887.
10. Circular, July 25, 1887.
11. Community Diary, August 4, 1887.
12. Record of the Elections of 1887.
13. Father Brady was stationed at St. Xavier's College, Cincinnati. He was one of the zealous promoters of devotion to the Sacred Heart, especially through the *Messenger of the Sacred Heart*. Garraghan, III, 548.
14. Reverend Walter Hill was one of the proponents of the neo-scholastic movement. He was successful in putting the Latin texts into the vernacular, and opening the study of philosophy to students in the colleges. Garraghan, III, 578.
15. Mother Euphrasie to Mme. de la Corbinière, April 8, 1887. English draft of letter.

16. Book of the Foundations, p. 53.
17. Details gathered from correspondence between Father M. J. O'Dwyer and Sisters.
18. Community Diary, January 14, 1889.
19. Letter of Bishop John J. Hogan to Mother Euphrasie, December 20, 1888. S.M.W.A.
20. Reminiscences of Sister Mary Marcella carry details.
21. Community Diary, December 28, 1888.
22. Acts of the Council, 1880-1914, December 31, 1888. S.M.W.A.
23. Bishop O'Connor to Mother Euphrasie, December 28, 1888. S.M.W.A.
24. Sister James Maurice O'Brien to Mother Mary Cleophas, May 2, 1901. Omaha File.
25. Henry J. Casper, S.J., *History of the Catholic Church in Nebraska* (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1966, 3 vols.), II, 211, 249.

CHAPTER XXIII

Out of Tribulation Come Consolation and Courage

Readjustments after the Fire. St. Rose, Chelsea.

Several times in the preceding chapter has the burning of the motherhouse been mentioned, more in relation to the development of our convents and schools rather than by direct description. It is time now to deal with the details of the fire, and the progress and effect of the calamity. The disaster interfered with many plans and stopped the work on the church and the academy as far as it could possibly be done with justice to the architect and the workmen. Unfortunately, events do not happen in orderly sequence so that they can be treated as consecutive happenings, although they must be set in some kind of order. Disasters upset timetables and calculations in 1889 just as they do in 1977. Shakespeare's battalions of trouble could always be expected, but could also be modified by prayer.

On this windy and bitterly cold morning of February 7, 1889, the routine of life at St. Mary's began its usual course. The fourteen Sisters who had completed their Thirty Days' Retreat on Christmas Eve under Sister Mary Cleophas, passed by her office to receive their work assignments for the day. Some were named for the bakery, some for housecleaning, and a few for the sewing room. In the latter group was Sister Mary Alberta Comer, a careful observer, who furnished some of the details that follow. Just after the nine o'clock Reunion bell rang, Sister Mary Alberta noticed the heaviness of the air around her, and saw black smoke coming from the attic. She and others went to get help and to spread the alarm. Frantic calls came from the Institute where the Sisters and children had a better idea of the extent of the fire than those in the building realized.

The workmen were sent for, but only two were on the premises as the rest had gone to the artificial lake near St. Ann's chapel, where the ice was five feet thick.¹ They were cutting blocks of ice to store in the icehouse for the coming summer, the customary method of providing refrigeration at that time. The telephone was not yet cut off by the fire, and the Fire Company, as it was called, was summoned from Terre

Haute to help. Some delay followed as the firemen could not leave the city limits unless the fire could not be checked at the point of origin. Nevertheless, the assistant chief, Mr. John Tully, ordered out the equipment over the rough country roads. He could have followed the railroad bed, but that was too long a trip. In forty-five minutes, Mr. Tully and his firemen: Hess, McClellan, Commoford, Shannon, and Barrett, reached the place only to see that the building was doomed.² The wooden additions for the men's refectory and the express hall were all in flames. The firemen saw that the only hope was to keep the fire contained within the area of the motherhouse. The Sisters, helped by the Academy girls and neighbors, were trying to salvage as much as possible by throwing out of the windows, bedding, furniture, supplies — everything portable.

There were several ill and helpless Sisters in the infirmary rooms in the main part of Providence, Mother Euphrasie herself, old Sister Athanasius, crippled by rheumatism, and Sister Francis Cecile Guénin,³ in a dying condition. The invalids were moved to the bakery, but as the fire approached the utility buildings, they were moved again, this time to the Institute. Fortunately, the long stretch of a quarter of a mile between the motherhouse and the Institute prevented the spread of the fire which was now contained in the area around Providence.

"The wind continued to blow," wrote the diarist, "seemingly from all sides and all directions, and no one can picture our anguish at seeing our beloved Mother Theodore's motherhouse on fire, the flames devouring our little chapel, and smoke pouring from the novitiate roof."

The frame and brick chapel had been moved in 1886, southwest of Providence in order to clear the ground for the foundation of the new church. Father Guéguen at the first alarm, had removed the Blessed Sacrament at once; but the fire destroyed the chapel completely, and everything in it that could not be taken out in time. The statue of St. Joseph which had been bought to match Bertaudiére's Madonna was lost in the fire. The organ and all the music, the selections of half a century, were destroyed.

Suddenly a shout came from the firemen: "If the wind does not change, the new church must go." The novices, whose eyes like those of the servant in the psalm, were always on the hands of their mistress, saw Sister Basilissa throw holy water in the form of a cross and heard her invoking the Holy Name for protection of the church and the novitiate.⁴

The east wall of the church nearest the fire in Providence was damaged. The convent bell, dislodged by the burning of the cupola, fell through the ruins to the ground with an ominous crash. But God answered the fervent prayers and protected the new church and the novitiate from serious damage. Mother Anastasie Brown, in order to make the work of carrying water to the novitiate roof easier, organized the novices to manage a relay of buckets of water to go from hand to hand up the stairs. Sister Francisca and another Sister helped to cut down the wooden partitions of the passageway joining Providence and the novitiate. Jules Delahaye, the gardener, mounted the roof connecting the two buildings and cut down the wooden archway.

That night the danger seemed over, but at eleven o'clock, fire broke out again in the rafters of the hall between Providence and the church. Sister Mary Alberta Comer and Sister Mary Elvire Lynn put shawls over their heads and were looking for the blaze when they met the two Hagan boys on the same errand. Some humorous incidents had occurred during that dreadful day, which were amusing in retrospect, but not so when they happened. Someone, for instance, carried a jar of piccalilli to a place of safety; and one unknown old woman, seated on the grass, searched through piles of shoes which had been thrown out the window until she found a pair that fit her.⁵

Offers of help and expressions of condolence poured in. Mr. Bohlen gave the Sisters \$1,000 in cash as a donation on a new building. Bishop Joseph Dwenger of Fort Wayne, sent \$200. Mothers Augustine and Ascension of the Holy Cross Sisters sent a draft for \$100 in Father Sorin's name; the Ladies of the Sacred Heart at Manhattanville sent fifty dollars, and Dr. Swafford, a local physician, gave a receipted bill for thirty-five dollars as a contribution to the new building.

Bishop Chatard announced himself for the evening of the fire. He came and was most devoted and compassionate in the time of anxiety. Earlier he had warned the Sisters that while dependence on Providence was to be their mainstay, they should not neglect the ordinary means of insuring the buildings. Following his advice, they took out insurance on the motherhouse, the Institute, and the novitiate on April 17, 1882, and had renewed it. Mr. L. C. Hagan, the local agent of the *Mutual Life* of Hartford and Springfield, Connecticut, came and appraised the loss. He paid the full amount of the insurance, \$12,000 for the motherhouse, and \$100 for lesser damage to the novitiate.⁶

The ruin of the fire is well portrayed by the historical scenes in the



diorama room. The ruins seemed to have been left standing only long enough to be sketched by the Sister artists; because at once Sister Mary Cleophas ordered Mr. Martin, one of the builders, to see to the removal of the crumbling walls. His force of sixteen men succeeded in taking down the ruined structure without any casualty.

Immediate readjustment was necessary in order to keep panic or reaction from causing further anxiety. The first care was to provide quarters for the homeless Sisters who were at once lodged in the Institute. The children's refectory was turned into a chapel where the Bishop said Mass the next morning. The Blessed Sacrament remained here until February 25. Then a chapel was arranged in a large room on the third floor of the Institute which had been the Sisters' dormitory.⁷ The refectory and recreation rooms were returned to the use of the students. The chapel remained on the third floor, with some interruptions, until the autumn of 1889. When the new Providence was sufficiently completed, the community room was used as a chapel.

The day after the fire, February 8, Mother Euphrasie sent a letter to the Sisters on the missions giving them news of the catastrophe, and telling them of the total destruction of the motherhouse, and the adjustments to life in the Institute. She also made clear that return to St. Mary's was impossible for the summer, and that no general retreat would be scheduled for the missionary Sisters.

The Bishop saw the necessity for a new motherhouse at once. Mr. Bohlen was instructed to prepare plans which he brought on February 13, less than a week after the fire. The diarist said of the plans: "Some modifications will have to be made in them in order to put in many of the things we have in mind." Needless to say, careful study and repeated inspection of the plans followed.

On February 21, the Sisters began a labor which they had always hoped they would never have to carry out — that of visiting the business men of Terre Haute to ask for alms for the new motherhouse. They were graciously received and contributions given, not in any unusual amount — \$300 given by Mr. Hulman was the largest single amount — but the total returns were satisfactory for the venture and were most gratefully received.

Washington's Birthday followed the hallowed tradition. Nothing must interfere with the happiness of the girls. The free afternoon and relaxation of the day removed the concern that unconsciously affected their light hearts. For the feastday dinner, decorations appropriate to

the day were much in evidence with the national colors. A few tree-branches kept up the cherry-tree story, to say nothing of the hatchet cookies, and cherry preserves which were consumed with pleasure.

For some days the ruins had been too hot to allow any investigating, but on this same holiday, Mother Euphrasie, who was now able to walk about the grounds, found part of the discipline used by Mother Theodore. Mother Euphrasie had often asked about it, whether it had been found, and now it was her happiness to find part of it herself. It is at present preserved in the Mother Theodore Room in Foley Hall.

The cornerstone, blackened and damaged, was opened on February 28, 1889, revealing charred paper and ashes, medals blackened and melted, but the gold coin intact and bright. The stone was set aside to be later built into the foundation of the new Providence. The safe likewise was rescued, but no key could open it. The contents, after the breaking of the safe, were a perfect wreck: papers in ashes, silver coins blackened and tarnished, but capable of restoration; no gold coins were there. March 7, 1889, marked the end of the finding of usable possessions.

The danger of fire touched upon the Sisters of Providence at Fort Wayne on February 16, 1889. St. Augustine Academy, situated on the corner of Calhoun and Jefferson Streets, was very close to the Fox Building, just north of the convent. Fire broke out and did much damage to the Fox Building. The flying sparks were a constant danger to St. Augustine's, and only the efficiency of the firemen and their fire-fighting equipment saved the Fox Building from complete destruction and reduced the damage to the convent. Again the safe policy of insurance had been followed and proved a great help to a beleaguered community. Mr. Havens, who managed the insurance for St. Augustine's, came to St. Mary's to have papers signed for the settlement of the loss sustained.⁸

Sunday, March 3, heralding the approach of Lent, saw the beginning of the Forty Hours Devotion in the temporary chapel. High Mass and opening ceremonies were held as was customary, and the Bishop came on March 5 for the closing of this cherished devotion.

Even though special prayer characterized the three days, the Sisters rejoiced at the inauguration of President Benjamin Harrison in 1889 on the traditional March 4. Though born in Ohio, President Harrison was always claimed as an Indiana man because of his long legal career in

Indianapolis. At any rate, politics as such did not enter into the Sisters' lives. Suffice it that the nation remained peaceful.

Normal life of the Community was continued in rooms on the second floor of the Academy. A room had been prepared for Mother Euphrasie at the head of the infirmary stairs in the Institute, and here she re-studied the opening of new missions and their personnel: Kansas City, South Omaha, and Chelsea, Massachusetts, the last two having been promised for August, 1889. Kansas City and South Omaha have been discussed in a previous chapter. They were treated together because of the similarity of their location on the western frontier, and their fortunes. Another project which had been in the mind of the Bishop and clergy for some time would not yet be activated: the setting-up of the St. Joseph Industrial Home in the former undeveloped seminary in St. Joseph's parish hall Indianapolis. The Home was to provide a place to which the orphan girls could be transferred from St. Ann's Asylum, Terre Haute, after they made their first Holy Communion, usually at age fourteen. In the new environment they were to be taught a trade, bookkeeping, sewing, managing a home, and their education continued. When they were eighteen years old, they could secure work in a home or store, Sister Mary Augusta McCauley was put in charge, and with her were Sisters Leocadia Coughlin and Mary Leonard Wolfe, who was recalled from Greencastle and replaced there by Sister St. Anthony Tierney. No orphan girls were yet ready to come, but the place had to be prepared for the opening in 1890.

Fire at St. Vincent's Orphanage

When word reached St. Mary's on May 6 that the Orphanage was burning and that there was no possibility of saving it, the first thought might have linked it to an early landmark, the Highland, Bishop de la Hailandière's planned home. There was no connection, however, as the site only could properly be known as Highland. All the old buildings were gone, and the orphanage, now being destroyed by fire, was a larger and more modern building, erected by Bishop de Saint-Palais in 1862. Mr. A. M. Ackeroyd was the architect, and the finished building was so fine that many of the generous contributors thought it should have been a seminary or a college, but the Bishop could see only one possibility — a home for the orphan boys.

The fire was caused by a spark falling from the chimney and igniting

the roof. The fire soon became uncontrollable, and within less than two hours the building was a total ruin. Sister Mary Carmel was sent from St. Mary's to offer advice and aid. There were 125 boys and twelve Sisters at the Orphanage. Sister Mary Theodore LeTouzé (Mother Theodore's niece), the local superior, with several Sisters brought seventy-five of the boys to Indianapolis. They were lodged in the old Seminary building of the former St. Joseph Church, fortunately now being prepared to be the Industrial Home. Fifty boys remained in the usable buildings and some of the Sisters stayed to care for them.

Bishop Chatard's efforts and appeals were responded to generously, and a new building, planned by Architect Oscar D. Bohlen and Contractor Martin, was completed and opened to the orphan boys on July 19, 1890.⁹

The Convent Girls' Concert and Bazaar

Late in April, the Sisters were invited to attend a concert and bazaar to be held in Lyra Hall,¹⁰ Indianapolis, on May 6, 7, and 8, 1889. The benefit was to be an offering to the Sisters of Providence to help build a new motherhouse to replace the one destroyed by fire on February 7, 1889.

Newspaper articles announced the coming event, stressing the fact that preparations were being made for a most enjoyable occasion.¹¹ The event was sponsored by former students and graduates of St. Mary's, and the "manageresses" of the affair stated quite plainly that there would be no soliciting of chances of any sort in the hall during the progress of the bazaar.

The room will be converted into a floral bower, and at all hours during the evening sweet music will be discoursed by an orchestra of ladies stationed on the stage. Refreshments will be handsomely served, and the variety and beauty of the articles on sale, which have been sent here from all parts of the country by old pupils of St. Mary's Institute, will exceed anything heretofore shown anywhere in this city.

The object is not one entirely separate from the interest of our citizens. It is to aid in rebuilding the ruined home of the Sisters of Providence who have been identified with Indianapolis for nearly half a century in every conceivable variety of charitable work.

They have never asked public assistance, but have built their own institutions by patient labor.¹²

All the attractive features that combine to make a successful entertainment were included. The concert opened each evening with "Convent Bells," presented by a group of young ladies in an orchestra containing fourteen instruments, including pianos, organ, guitars, mandolins, and cymbals. Varied musical selections continued during each evening while the guests visited the souvenir, art, and refreshment booths.

The children had their share in the entertainment. Eloise Morton and Marie Rich with Masters Clarence Coffin and Fred Dickson, danced "The Sailors' Hornpipe." The fishpond had as much lure for the young people as it did for the elders; and then there was the doll booth, and also the postoffice booth where a foreign-stamped letter or prize package was redeemed with a payment of ten cents. The contents brought much amusement.¹³

Names familiar to the Sisters of that time, and to their successors who study the Alumnae Record and literature, flit through the pages. We see the Misses Davis, Bearss, Sidener, Johnson, Mary Korbly, Sarah Logan, many of whom were to add another surname very soon. Louise Küssner sang "Desire," and "Open Thy Heart."

The three nights of the bazaar were successful. Not only did they awaken the attention of the public to the need of the Sisters, but they created a respect for the ability of the "Convent Girls" to work for a good cause.

A Graceful Word of Thanks

Sister Camilla Morrison was detailed by Mother Euphrasie to write a suitable poetic address for distribution to the audience, expressing the gratitude of the Sisters. The poem was an easily-read narrative, and ends in thanking the former pupils for their loyalty and the audience for its support. The title of the poem, "The Cloud That Dimmed Our Golden Dawn," referred to the coming golden jubilees of 1890-91, of the foundation of the Community in 1840, and the establishment of the Institute in 1841. The poem is lengthy and reviews the sudden destruction of the motherhouse, "the Eden of the heart." It did not dwell too long on the sad event, but the last stanzas show the hope that the loyalty of the former pupils inspired. We quote the closing lines:

St. Mary's with maternal pride
Beholds in bright array
Her daughters rise — an army grand —
To aid her cause today.
They bid her cast away all doubt
And quell her heaving sighs
That from her ashes — Phoenix-like —
New Providence shall rise.

The heavy cloud has rolled away,
The day-star shines anew,
And like an eclipse of the sun,
But gives a brighter view.
The monument of "Daughters'" zeal
To Alma Mater given

Like healing balm to wounded hearts
Rebinds the ties a-riven.
And whilst our Alleluias
With prayer's aroma blend,
The choicest wishes of our hearts
For them shall e'er ascend.¹³

May 8, 1889 The Sisters of Providence

Our Neighbors Respond

Terre Haute was not slow in profferring assistance. On June 18, 1889, Naylor's Grand Opera House was made available for the use of the Sisters and students. The program planned by the music department was a rehearsal of the musical numbers which were to be incorporated in the coming Commencement exercises. The long, and shall we say learned, essays were omitted, and also any numbers incidental to Commencement Day itself. The lengthy numbers would not interest any casual groups as they were intended to please the parents, and put a finishing touch on the best education the devoted parents hoped they had given their daughters. Sister St. Clare Rielag, director of music, summoned a few of the singers of the previous year to supplement the concert. The pianos, the seraphine, and the harp made safe journeys to and from the Opera House. Placing the concert at eight o'clock in the evening was an excellent thought as few people not directly interested

in the girls graduating could afford to spend the time at the day-long closing exercises. The bringing of the concert to Terre Haute gave much pleasure.

The program issued to the audience consisted of four eight by twelve inch pages, two of which dealt with the history of St. Mary's, and some notes on the disaster of the fire. The other two listed the concert numbers. These latter were inserts of three by four inches. All around the central inserts on each page were grouped advertisements from fifty-five firms, among which can be seen names familiar today to the Sisters and Terre Haute people. Appearing are: Buntin Drug Store, Hoberg, Root and Company, Hulman's "Dauntless Coffee," P. J. Ryan, Undertaker; George C. Foulkes, Smith and Hager, Havens, Insurance; Hazeldine, Frank Prox, Herz Ladies' Bazaar, Küssner, Zimmermann Stove Store, Watson Plumbing, McWilliams Footwear, Eiser's Ice Cream, Terre Haute Coal and Lime, Allen, Kelley and Company, Insurance; Richardson China Store, Black and Nisbet, Undertakers; and many others whose names have been changed by transfer of ownership. The Globe Printing Company arranged the advertisements.

Sister Mary Carmel O'Farrell and Sister St. Columba Henderson accompanied the girls who were to appear, as did also several Sisters whose names are not listed. They all reported an appreciative audience and a hall well-filled, even though some very interesting attractions were offered in Terre Haute that same evening.¹⁴

The Village people also wished to do something. Although they had always been very welcome to come to the rehearsal the night before Commencement, they asked for a special rehearsal on Monday evening, June 24, when more of them could arrange to come. Their request was granted, and the donation they offered was forty-five dollars, a very acceptable sum.

Special Events and Retreats of 1889

The location of the chapel on the third floor created a problem when funerals were to be arranged. Sister Francis Cecile Guénin, who was critically ill at the time of the fire, died on April 5. It was decided that the Mass for her would be said in the third floor chapel, and the remains viewed in the reception room of the Institute, at present the French Quarter (1977). The funeral services and blessing of the corpse were

performed in that room, and the procession accompanying the remains followed the ordinary paths to the cemetery. Sister Francis Cecile had been a teacher in the music department, and several of her former pupils came to the funeral. It was clear that some other arrangement would have to be made for the future.¹⁵

When Sister Felicita Melchior, ordinarily called Sister Felicity, died on May 7, 1889, a temporary altar was erected in the large room of the novitiate. Father Guéguen said the Mass and conducted the funeral services. The procession left by the east door of the novitiate.

The same procedure was followed for the next funeral, that of Sister Mary Loyola McTegart on June 3. When Sister Mary Reparata Corrigan died at Greencastle on September 15, at first it was thought that she would be buried in Greencastle, but there was no Catholic cemetery there, or in the vicinity. Therefore the remains were brought to St. Mary's for burial.¹⁶ Father John J. Macke, the pastor, and a group of Greencastle friends accompanied Sister Celestine Bloomer and Sister Mary Aurelia Laugel on the train. A few days later the Sisters at St. Mary's were startled by the arrival of James Corrigan, the brother of the deceased Sister. He had opposed her entrance into the religious life and tried to persuade her to leave while she was a novice at St. Philip's, Chicago. He seemed very calm and said he must have certification of her death in order to settle the family estate. The box containing the coffin was disinterred. As the coffin had a glass insert in the lid, Sister's remains could be clearly seen. At one side of the box the doctor's certificate was affixed. This was the document Mr. Corrigan needed for the legal settlement, and he was satisfied to receive it. In every way he manifested his approval of all that had been done.¹⁷

Places sufficiently large to care for Commencement Exercises had to be arranged, also for the care of visitors at that function; and later for St. Anne's Day, July 26, and the August reception and profession ceremonies. For the event of Commencement, June 26, a stage was set up in the north recreation room at the Institute, and smaller rooms used for the meeting of visitors. The Bishop could not be present as he had a previous engagement with the Christian Brothers in St. Louis. Monsignor Bessonies, Vicar General, presided and presented the diplomas. He confined his remarks to congratulating the parents and the graduates. The musical program has already been commented on as part of the concert given in Terre Haute.

Assumption — Retreats, 1889

The spiritual preparation of the postulants, and of the Sisters for temporary and final profession had to be provided for. The meditations for the older group were given by Reverend Thomas Hughes, and the young Sisters and postulants entrusted to Reverend Joseph Rigge, both Jesuits from the Missouri Province. All the retreatants expressed themselves as greatly pleased at the work of the retreats. The older group found Father Hughes solid and practical, and his delivery clear and attractive. "He used neither book nor scrip; his language was very fluent," wrote the diarist. "He used new words in just the correct places, and always the exact ones." These were great men and were appreciated.¹⁸ The Jesuit Fathers were always excellent, but to this time of concern and anxiety of the Community, they seemed specially adapted. Father Rigge was equally successful with the younger Sisters. They found his instructions attractive and spiritual. He made the morning meditation with them every day during the retreat, putting into practice what he had been teaching them.¹⁹

The Assumption services followed the customary order, but an air of sadness made itself felt. The jubilance of the Sisters and the happiness of the newly-professed were tempered by the realization of the approaching death of Mother Euphrasie. Although the deterioration of her health and strength was known to all the Sisters during the last few months of 1888, and particularly at the time of the fire, there was no thought or mention of her resigning her office. When the Decree of Praise went into effect in 1887, the election then carried out gave Mother Euphrasie a six-year term instead of the former three-year one. Her health at that time was about as it had always been, and no alarming symptoms showed until an operation for cancer was imperative. She made a slow recuperation; but was able to discharge her duties, with the exception of the visitations of 1889, helped by her able Council. Now it was left to the Will of God to set the time of the close of her administration, an event certainly imminent in the summer of 1889.

The Schools Await Their Teachers

The Sisters named for replacement in the schools of the Michigan houses left after August 16 for their destinations. The two new missions of South Omaha, Nebraska, and Chelsea, Massachusetts, had been promised for August, 1889, the far east and the far west of our

schools. These engagements must be met no matter how deeply the Sisters felt on leaving their dying Mother. Sister Manetto Quigley and Sister Natalie Hurtubise were added to the Kansas City mission opened in January, 1889, as additional teachers. The history of the two far west missions has been discussed in the preceding chapter. St. Rose, Chelsea, did not have their particular problems; but it, like every other school in an untried territory, presented its own difficulties. Further discussion of Chelsea will have its own place later. The colony of fifteen Sisters, headed by Sister Mary Cyril Kilroy, left on Tuesday, August 20, at 12:30 P.M. on the Pennsylvania Limited train, due to arrive in Boston at 9:30 P.M. on Wednesday.

During the days of departure, the Sisters set forth on their designated ways, giving their suffering Mother a loving glance of gratitude, and a prayer for her for all she had done for them. God blessed the Sisters for their resignation to His holy Will by giving them, both at St. Mary's and in the convents, the gift of peace.²⁰

Mother Euphrasie's Death and Funeral

Mother Euphrasie died at 3:45 on the morning of August 27, 1889, after several days of semi-consciousness which gradually drifted into a coma. She had been able to receive Holy Communion on the twenty-first, but not after that day. Bishop Chatard came twice during the week but he could not stay any length of time. Groups of Sisters, succeeding one another, knelt in prayer at Mother Euphrasie's bed, praying for her. After she had expired, telegrams were sent to the Bishop, and to other clerical friends who had asked to be notified of her death. A short death circular was sent to the Sisters on the missions, promising full details later.

The funeral was set for August 29. Mother Euphrasie lay in state in the north recreation room of the Institute. Fortunately, the temporary chapel in the south recreation room, used during the summer, had not been dismantled. Preceded by a large number of sisters carrying lighted tapers, the coffin was moved to the temporary chapel, followed by the clergy, thirteen in number, and Bishop Chatard, who was to pontificate. The roles of the clergy were as follows: Right Rev. August Bessonies, assistant priest; deacons of honor: Very Rev. A. Schmiedler and Very Rev. Herman J. Alerding; deacon of the Mass, Rev. Ernest Audran; sub-deacon, Rev. Michael McEvoy; master of cere-

monies, Rev. Francis H. Gavisk; second master of ceremonies, Rev. August Riehle; acolytes, Rev. J. J. Macke and Rev. Joseph Bauer. Clergymen present in the sanctuary were Rev. John Guéguen, Rev. J. J. McGovern, D.D.; Rev. G. M. Ginnsz, Rev. L. Reich, O.M.C., and Very Rev. Victor Schnell. Dr. Willien assisted in the singing. Their voices made the Gregorian Chant beautiful and grand. Dr. Van Valzah and Mr. Buntin were present.

The Bishop gave a beautiful eulogy of Mother Euphrasie's life, stressing her youth, her detachment, her patience in suffering the long years of alienation from her family, and her heroic endurance of pain. After the address, the Bishop intoned the *Libera*, incensed and blessed the remains, and the procession started for the cemetery. The chanters led the *Benedictus*, sung by the priests, each versicle having as a refrain, "Requiem aeternam dona ei, Domine," sung by the Sisters. The beauty of the alternating voices carried through the solemn stillness.²¹

The large force of men employed in building the church and the new Providence attended the funeral. Two of the original six French Sisters, Sister Mary Xavier Lerée and Sister Olympiade Boyer, were present. All of the Sisters able to come, paid this tribute of respect; and all remained until the end. At the conclusion of the graveside prayers, Mother Euphrasie's remains in the plain, brown-stained coffin were lowered into her grave.²²

Many of the clergy departed after the ceremony. In the afternoon, the Bishop met the Council members for a discussion of Community affairs. On August 30, the next day, he met the whole Community and announced that he, as Apostolic Delegate, would send a full account of the happenings to Rome; and that while waiting for word in answer, he was appointing Sister Mary Cleophas to exercise full power as Superior-General until the election during the following year.

We may dwell now on a few facts regarding Mother Euphrasie. Her life was short, but an active one. She was the fourth successor of Mother Theodore whom she could not have known personally. The three superiors-general who followed Mother Theodore knew the young Sister during her years in the Community, and each of them valued her ability as a teacher and a local superior. All three, Mother Mary Cecilia, Mother Anastasie, and Mother Mary Ephrem, were delegates to the Chapters of 1883, 1886, and 1887, during which Mother Euphrasie was elected. These same former administrators were

present at her funeral. As the first Mother General to follow Mother Theodore in death, even though fourth in the line of succession, Mother Euphrasie was buried in a nearby spot in the row north of the tomb of the Foundress. In the course of time, all graves of superiors-general have been grouped close to the central circle. Many members of the Community, distinguished by their long years of service, have been buried in the north area. The senior Sisters of today may remember that, in their youth, the northern part of the cemetery was lovingly referred to as the "Saints' Patch."

NOTES — CHAPTER XXIII

1. Community Diary, February 7, 1889.
2. *Wabash Courier*, February 8, 1889.
3. Sister Francis Cecile Guénin, who died on April 5, 1889, was the great-aunt of the present Sisters Emily and Leona Walsh.
4. "Novitiate Notes of the Fire," Ms. Typescript.
5. Some details from Sister Mary Alberta Comer's Memoirs.
6. Community Diary, February 14, 1889.
7. Reception and profession ceremonies were held in this chapel from March 25, 1889, until August 15, 1889, when they were held in the south recreation room of the Institute, then the summer chapel.
8. Community Diary, February 27, 1889.
9. Details adapted from the Centennial Brochure, "One Hundred Years of Char-
ity," and the Community Diary of the Sisters of Providence, May 6-10, 1889.
10. *Indianapolis News*, 1889. n.d.
11. Clipping File 1, 1889. S.M.W.A.
12. *Indianapolis News*, May 9, 1889.
13. Clipping File 1, 1889. S.M.W.A.
14. Community Diary, June 19, 1889.
15. *Ibid.*, April 6, 1889.
16. Sister Celestine Bloomer's Reminiscences, p. 4. Typescript.
17. Community Diary, September 20, 1889.
18. Rev. Thomas Hughes was a gifted historian. He was later chosen to write "The History of the Society of Jesus in North America." Garraghan, **III**, 655. Cf., *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (1967), 7, 255.
19. Father Rigge was noted for his work in bringing the natural sciences department at Creighton University to a high level. A decade later, he devoted his talents to working among the Maya Indians in Central America. Garraghan, **III**, 472. Cf., *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1967), 9, 255.
20. Community Diary, August 15 1889.
21. Details from Community Diary, August 29, 1889, and the Necrology, II, 198.
22. Sister St. Cosmas Gallagher, "Mother Euphrasie Hinkle," *In God's Acre*, p. 102.

CHAPTER XXIV

Golden Jubilees. Thanksgiving. Final Approbation of the Rule.

Indiana Schools Opened: St. Patrick's, Fort Wayne; Frenchtown.
The World's Columbian Exposition, 1893.

The association of the Sisters of Providence with Chelsea, Massachusetts, came first through Reverend James McGlew, the pastor of Saint Rose Church. As early as 1888, he, a pastor laboring to advance the parochial schools, wrote asking for Sisters to come and teach his school. He made it clear that the request was not for that present year, but for the year following, 1889, as he was not quite ready.

In reality, the Girl's Parish School had been taught since 1872 by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. They were withdrawing from the school, because they were not permitted to teach boys.¹ Mother Euphrasie accepted the school, because the offer was really well presented. In his letter of June 6, 1888, Father McGlew stated that the Sisters of Charity, particularly Sister Aloysia, of the Camden Street Home had advised him to write to the Sisters of Providence, "hoping that you would be able to take the school. Boston prides itself on the public schools, and our parochial schools must compete with them."²

He explained that he had a new schoolhouse already built, having three stories and a basement, and a sub-basement for apparatus and storage. There are twelve classrooms beautifully furnished, and also rooms for wraps, and a little sitting room for the teachers. The convent is of brick and nearly as large as the school. It could accommodate fifty Sisters, and the location is dry and healthy. The church is within a few yards of the convent. Please take this under consideration and tell me whether you would like to come and establish a reputable convent. Our parish has six or seven thousand Catholics out of a population of thirty thousand, and is about twenty minutes away from the center of Boston.³

At the time the application was made, the Community could not accept it as it was short of Sisters and had already contracted to take

Kansas City and South Omaha schools, both large. However, Mother Euphrasie promised that in August, 1889, she would be able to open this school, because several small missions were closing on account of changes in Catholic population trends and lack of means to support a convent.

Accordingly, the Sisters left August 20, 1889, for their first distant Eastern mission. Sister Mary Cyril Kilroy was superior,⁴ accompanied by Sisters Gaudentia McNamara, Mary Esther Bradley, Mary Pauline Michael, Mary Theodosia Mug, Mary Olivia Lynch, Agnes Marie Tuohig, Mary Leopoldine Burke, Mary Dafrosa Morgan, Mary Brigitta Naumann, Mary Amelia Dahler, Mary Siena Gretter, Madeline Anger, Catherine Marie Daly, and Winifred O'Malley. This was an unusually large number of Sisters to be placed on a mission in its first year, but because the group included a superior, a housekeeper, and a cook, the number of teachers was reduced to twelve. The Sisters were very much impressed with the fact that they were going on a fast train. They would leave Terre Haute at 12:30 P.M. on Tuesday, August 20, and arrive in Boston at 9:30 P.M., on Wednesday, August 21.

They were met by the Reverend Hugh P. Smyth of St. Joseph Church, Boston, representing Father McGlew, who was then absent in Ireland. After a train ride of thirty hours the Sisters were very weary, but also delighted to find that the two assistants at Saint Rose Church, Reverend Thomas Coghlan and Reverend Hugh F. Mulligan, had everything ready for their reception. The ladies of the parish had made every effort to be gracious and efficient hostesses.

Sister Mary Cyril deputized one of the younger Sisters to write an account of the trip to send to St. Mary's. The reporter opens her narrative in an amusing way by mentioning the comment made by one black porter to another as fifteen Sisters entered the Pullman car. "There sure will be a big prayer meeting held here tomorrow." The young reporter comments on the beauty of the Great Lakes as the train passed along their edges, and names the rivers as the train crosses them. Some of the Sisters became ill from the fatigue of thirty hours on the train, but all soon rallied. "Boston Baked Beans" seemed to be a new expression to some of them, wrote the narrator, but Sister Mary Cleophas was not to think that their menu was baked beans and fried fish. It was a very good breakfast that was prepared for the Sisters after

the nine o'clock Mass on the morning of August 22. The assiduous reporter, profiting by the Sisters' observations on the new school and the convent during the next few days, drew a floor plan for each building.⁵ Unconsciously, she was contributing to the history of the school since much of the school and all of the convent were destroyed in the fire of 1908.

Sister Mary Theodosia, the narrator, an eighth grade teacher, wrote a hymn for her girls to sing in the church on Christmas, 1889. Well known to the senior Sisters of Providence, "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks at Night," it was very devotional, but written in the type of composition then in favor. After its publication by the Joseph Krolage Company of Cincinnati, it moved westward to St. Mary's and to many of our schools. It was included for many years among the melodious Christmas hymns of other years.

The Sisters had come with the permission of His Excellency, John Joseph Williams, D.D., the Archbishop of Boston, but the contract was signed by Father McGlew as the Archbishop's agent. The arrangement was that the means of support of the school would consist of tuition collected from the pupils and an additional \$1,000 paid yearly by the pastor. When school opened the first Tuesday in September, nearly seven hundred children were enrolled, two hundred of whom were boys.

Father McGlew did not return from Ireland until October, but he was very happy to see the school running well as far as the teaching and administration were concerned, but there was a little difficulty about the support. Eastern schools did not allow the collecting of tuition from pupils. The schools were free schools, and Father McGlew thought that tuition meant fees for music, art, and special subjects. The \$1,000 he originally allowed to supplement these fees was not enough to maintain fifteen Sisters.

Sister Mary Cleophas, acting Superior General, came to visit the school in May, 1890. After a conference with Father McGlew the arrangement was made that he would raise the amount given to the Sisters to \$2,000 and assume all expenses for the convent and the school. The difficulty of teaching boys beyond the primary grades came up again, but a compromise was effected by teaching boys and girls in separate rooms. A high school was opened for girls, with music, art, and commercial subjects optional. There was a vast field for

zealous work opening to the Sisters among the young people of the parish.

The education of boys continued to be a problem. It required some time to convince the parents that the boys should attend the parochial school. Father McGlew repeated that the action of the recent Council of Baltimore (1884) had made it imperative that every parish should have a parochial school,⁶ and that girls and boys should be given equal advantages. Recognition was his own stress. The girls received diplomas at the completion of the eight grades, and had a little celebration as well, but not much notice was taken of the boys. Father McGlew represented very strongly that a certificate or diploma should be given to every boy who passed his eighth grade work satisfactorily. This was finally agreed to, and the cooperation of the boys in their studies was definitely secured. Before long, the boys were qualified for entrance from eighth grade into public high school, and then on to more advanced studies in college.

Everything worked out well in Chelsea. The people grew to know the Sisters and were willing to entrust their daughters to them not only as pupils, but also as novices and future Sisters. Father McGlew was exceedingly kind to his parish teachers. He died in 1902 and was succeeded by Father Thomas A. Power (1902-1907), who did a great deal of building in the five years. He reconstructed the church, extending the sanctuary some thirty feet, and began a new rectory on Tudor Street. The Sisters' tenure at Chelsea has been a long one, and certainly a peaceful one. Each pastor should be remembered for his contribution to the well-being of the Sisters as far as his means allowed. Reverend Thomas Cusack succeeded Reverend Thomas A. Power. Father Cusack loved the people very much, and they loved him. His incumbency was very brief. On Palm Sunday, 1908, more than half the city, including the church property, was destroyed by fire. It nearly broke Father Cusack's heart. He died in January, 1909. Father William F. Powers was appointed permanent rector of the parish, and the work of reconstruction went on. Most of the parishioners had lost all they had in the big fire, but they labored together for the rebuilding, which was virtually a rebirth, of the parish. The new rectory on Tudor Street was turned over to the Sisters for their convent, and the clergy resumed residence in the former rectory which was not totally destroyed. In the meantime, the families of the parish sheltered the Sisters in their homes.

Important Catholic Congress in Baltimore

Three things were notable about November 10, 1889: the celebration of the centenary of Archbishop Carroll's appointment as Bishop of Baltimore, the dedication of the Catholic University of America, and finally the calling of the first Catholic Congress, the first time that the laity had been called in to voice their views. Each diocese was to name at least two delegates for the convention. According to our Community Diary of November 10, 1889, Mr. John Breen of Loogootee and Mr. C. A. Korbly of Madison were named. There was a great deal of anxiety and reluctance on the part of Cardinal Gibbons to bring in the laity for the discussions,⁷ but he was finally prevailed upon to call them in. The Cardinal was conscious of the rising secularization of the Church in America, the perils of Trusteeism, and the attempt of lay trustees to take over ecclesiastical control in many parishes, which had been finally regulated. The assembly now had the possibility of distinguished Catholic laymen to speak for the welfare of the Church. The lay delegates recognized the strong unity possible to the Church as a "congregation of the faithful, professing the same faith, and partaking of the same sacraments." The disorders in the Church could not be cured by endless instruction. It was up to the laity to study their own problems, and to cooperate with the suggestions offered. The satisfaction of the first congress encouraged the assembly to set a time for a second congress during the World's Fair.

The second Catholic Congress, scheduled to take place from September 4 to 9, 1893, at the World's Fair in Chicago, came under the direction of Archbishop Patrick A. Feehan.⁸ The great problems which were involved were the preservation of the faith and the Americanization of the immigrants who were settling in great numbers in Chicago.⁹ The teaching of the faith was a multiple process, involving many foreign languages and customs. The Archbishop stressed education as an important objective, and called upon the schools to cooperate.

A Dedicated Friend, Mr. D. A. Bohlen, Dies

On June 2, 1890, word came to Sister Mary Cleophas of the death of Mr. Diedrich A. Bohlen, in Indianapolis. His loss was a great one as Mr. Bohlen had been a true and tried friend of the Sisters of Providence. Since the days when he, a gifted architect, devoted his talents to

the remodeling and expansion of the Academy in Mother Mary Cecilia's time, he had progressed with our needs from remodeling to designing and erecting one building after another. In the year just ended, the erection of the Church and the new Providence had been under his care and that of Mr. Oscar, his son. The Sisters prayed for him, asking God to reward their good and generous friend.

The General Chapter of 1890 Sets a Long Course

The General Chapter, instead of being held during the first few days of the August retreat, was put forward to July 16, 1890. This date was often used thereafter, but many events caused a change; for instance, the serious setting up of the summer school at St. Mary's, and opportunities for summer study for the Sisters away from the motherhouse which became more and more available.

Sister delegates arrived from Chelsea, Saginaw, and Kansas City promptly. Other missions closer to home had no difficulty sending their delegates on time. The procedure followed was that specified in the Rule of 1887 which was now in its testing time before final approval.

Sessions were held on July 15, and the elections took place without any difficulty on July 16, 1890. To the great satisfaction of the Sisters, the elected Superior-General was Mother Mary Cleophas, well known for her tact and leadership during the interim year. Those Sisters who had made their novitiate under her knew her as worthy of their complete trust. In her safe hands the fate of the Community was to rest for many years. With her as councilors were Sister Mary Ursula Fearn, Mother Anastasie Brown, Mother Mary Ephrem Glenn, econome, Sister Mary Ambrose O'Donald, secretary, Sister Mary Albertine Sondermann, and Sister Basilissa Heiner, mistress of novices. These experienced Sisters were to be a strong support to Mother Mary Cleophas in all the events of the next six years.

Summer school for the Sisters was resumed on July 17, 1890.¹⁰ The work had been begun after the novitiate building of 1880 provided space enough for housing. The discussion took place in the Institute. The fire of 1889 retarded the regular progress but in 1890, it was time to reorganize. The Board of Education was made up of Sisters Basilissa Heiner, Camilla Morrison, Mary Cyril Kilroy, Celestine Bloomer, and Ignatia O'Conner. The secretaries were Sisters Mary Euphemia O'Donnell and Mary Theodosia Mug. The minutes of the meetings

were carefully recorded, fortunately not in terse parliamentary style, but including the suggestions drawn from the experience of three hundred teachers in forty-four schools. Out of the work of the successive summers came *The Teacher's Guide*, embodying the philosophy of education of the Sisters of Providence.¹¹ Kept for a few years in manuscript form, pending alterations, the *Guide* appeared in printed form in 1895, 1899, and 1914, the 1914 edition being definitely final. The book was adapted in general to the needs of teachers in the grade schools, but did not ignore the high schools which were rapidly developing in the parishes.

The Golden Jubilee Year

The first of the three golden jubilee celebrations was that of Reverend John Guéguen, chaplain since 1879 at St. Mary's. The anniversary date of his ordination was August 15, but on account of the termination of the annual retreat, and mission assignments for the Sisters, the celebration was postponed to August 19. The clipping file in the Archives contains a lengthy account of the jubilee, but the edges of the newspaper are so carefully clipped that it is difficult to say precisely what paper the account comes from. From the sympathetic and understanding tone of the article, one may surmise that it was taken from the diocesan paper, *The Catholic Record* of Indianapolis. We quote: "Monday evening, August 18, 1890, Reverend Father Guéguen's elegant residence was lighted and beautifully decorated. The fine forest trees lining the avenue were hung with Chinese lanterns, and when the train stopped at St. Mary's station, bringing the clergy and friends, one hundred gun salutes were fired. On Tuesday morning, Mass succeeded Mass from half past four until half past nine."¹²

The Bishop, Rt. Rev. Francis S. Chatard, of Indianapolis, accompanied by thirty priests, presided. The reverend jubilarian sang his own anniversary Mass. The long file of priests entering the north recreation room of the Institute made an imposing sight. The older priests had been contemporaries of Father Guéguen in the earlier days; a number had studied with him in the Vincennes seminary. Others, younger, had been his students when he was superior of the seminary. Among the thirty were two potential bishops, Rev. Denis O'Donaghue and Rev. Herman J. Alerding. Bishop Chatard, noted for his eloquence, paid fitting tribute to the honored guest for his long life of service to the

Church. The Sisters furnished the music. Through the Gregorian chant, and the jubilee hymns, the Sisters and clergy offered their greetings.

How pleasant it would have been to offer to have the chaplain's jubilee celebrated in the new church, but it was still unfinished and not yet blessed. In order to share some part of the new building with their chaplain, the Sisters had prepared a banquet for the Bishop and the clergy to be served in the room now designated as Providence Library.¹³ Informal and congratulatory speeches directed to the jubilarian were quite in order. Gifts were presented by the Bishop, the clergy, the Sisters, the Academy girls, and friends.

The jubilees of the foundation of 1840 and the opening of the Institute had been planned for separate celebrations, but occupying a full year. Later, it was decided to begin the festivity of the Community on October 21-22, 1890, and to set aside a four-day weekend at Commencement, June 21 to 24, 1891, for the graduates of that year, and to invite all former students and graduates to come.

The Sisters' Golden Jubilee Year began before they could realize it. Many friends were conscious of the approaching celebration, and many tokens of appreciation were offered in the nature of unexpected gifts: books, a surprise check, furnishings, and odds and ends for the new house. On September 2, 1890, Bishop Chatard said Mass in the convent Community Room which then became the chapel until the church was finished. Then he went through the building and blessed the house.

The novices' refectory in Providence, now known as Refectory Two, became the Sisters' Community Room as many of the novices had gone on mission for their required year of active experience. Those who remained moved into the Sisters' refectory where all shared the first meal, supper, served on the same day as the blessing of the house. With so much to talk about, no one could do much eating. The moving process which had been going on at intervals was about as quiet and uneventful as one could expect. Then, happily at home at last, after the unsettled life of the past year, the Sisters enjoyed their first night in their new motherhouse.

On September 13, 1890, the electric lights were tested. Installed by the Edison Company, on the recommendation of Notre Dame, the display was the first exhibition in Vigo County of a building completely lighted by electricity. Some publicity had been given to it in the

newspapers in Terre Haute and Indianapolis as the "grand illumination" of Providence Convent. Mr. and Mrs. Oscar D. Bohlen, Mr. and Mrs. John Perry and friends were invited to come for the display. Mr. H. Schumaker, as representative of the Edison Company, was present to oversee the exhibition.

Mr. Bohlen, in order to keep the name of the firm in memory, held his five-year-old son, August, in his arms so that the child could turn the switch to release the illumination. He felt then that grandfather, son, and grandson were all connected with the building of Providence and the church.

The motherhouse was ablaze with lights. From within the lights glowed in the darkness without, lighting up the grounds brilliantly, and shining from every window. Six hundred lights! No one had ever seen the like!¹⁴ If the diarist were not writing, she, like everyone else, would have been speechless. Visitors and Academy girls went through the building, and penetrated to the engine room to inspect the dynamos.

Twenty years later, young August Bohlen, the switch turner, came to join his father, and the name "Bohlen & Son" became authentic again.

This is the day the Lord hath made!

The Golden Jubilee day of the Foundation was laden with memories, but above all, the spiritual note predominated. On October 21, 1890, the opening program was held in the novitiate recreation room. Mother Theodore's picture was framed with oak leaves, and branches of oak and maple leaves added the local color touch. The branches recalled that far-away October 22, 1840, when Mother Theodore and her five valiant companions came into our dark woods to build a home. The program was composed of musical and literary selections, but most pleasing to the audience were readings from Mother Theodore's journals of travel, particularly the narrative of leaving France, the ocean voyage, the crossing of America, and what they found in Indiana. The journals were still in manuscript form and very precious, always handled with great care as they are in Mother Theodore's own handwriting.

Sisters Mary Xavier and Olympiade lived over old memories as they heard the account read; Sister Agnes Dukant, the last survivor of the four postulants who were awaiting the Sisters' coming, called back again those happy hours. Forgetfulness, which may have softened the

memory of the privations of those days, dropped the shrouding veil, and revealed the loneliness, the poverty, the log cabin, the poor chapel, and its bare adornments. The future was to see the eagerness with which a generation of Sisters yet to come would seize upon the printed copies of the *Journals and Letters*, and take them to their hearts.

On the morning of the jubilee, an early Mass was said by Father Riehle, and the High Mass at nine o'clock by Father Guéguen. Congratulations and happy expressions of gratitude were characteristic of the day.

In the afternoon the grandchildren, those whose mothers or grandmothers had attended the Academy, came to call on Mother Mary Cleophas and the Sisters. The young guests were treated to cake and apples, and each girl received a bouquet of flowers. And so the happy day ended.

Still Providence had no bell. On November 14, 1890, the bell arrived from St. Louis, but supports had to be built in the cupola of the convent before installing it. The Bishop came on November 22, 1890, the feast of St. Cecilia, for the blessing or "christening" of the bell. From time immemorial bells have been given secular names and Christian names as well. "Big Ben" is the hour bell of the Westminster clock of the House of Parliament, London, and "Great Tom" is the curfew bell of Christchurch, Cambridge University, England. The convent bell must have a name with special meaning. Let one name be "Michael" to invoke his continual protection; another should be "Cecilia," as this is the feast of that Saint; but above all, "Mary," as our woods, our convent, and ourselves are hers. Twenty years later, in 1910, each of the eleven bells placed in the clock tower of the church will all bear three names, and one of the names on each bell will be "Mary." Our convent bell, identified in the passing of our lives, was christened on November 22, 1890, "Mary Michael Cecilia."

The Golden Jubilee of the Institute

During April, 1891, Mr. Bohlen and his men had been staking out walks from the Institute to the church, and all around the church, setting in relief the beautiful architecture of the building. Strikingly impressive also was the ordered beauty of the motherhouse. Many preparations still had to be made. The church was an imposing structure, roofed, and ready to be used as an auditorium. No other place was

large enough for the audience expected. As the church had not been blessed or dedicated, it could be used for the Commencement Exercises and the "Golden Reunion."

Scaffolding had been put up on the outside of the church. Mr. Ittenbach and his men were building up the clock tower by putting the cut stones into correct position, and soon the cross would be placed on the tower. On June 12, 1891, selected as the day of the erection, Mother Mary Cleophas and the Sisters who could leave their duties, knelt in Providence corridor, praying that the cross could be elevated without accident. Finally, between two and three o'clock in the afternoon, the cross, guided by men with ropes, reached the desired height, and dropped into its socket with a satisfactory thud. Mr. Bohlen, Mr. Wynne, and Mr. Ittenbach remained on the grounds all afternoon. This was a little strange as their work was done, and they seemed to be doing nothing. At eight o'clock in the evening, the Sisters were summoned, and the secret was revealed.¹⁴ Suddenly, the cross shone forth radiant in the brilliancy of sixty electric lights. The contractors were delighted to give the Sisters so much manifest pleasure through their surprise contribution to the coming function.

Scaffolding had been built inside the church as well. All had to be removed to provide space for chairs for the Commencement and Reunion guests. The inside structure was almost complete, and the pink and gray pillars of Georgian marble, supporting the gallery, were in position. Frescoes, painting, and stained glass windows were to be completed later. A large stage, erected in the space destined to be the sanctuary of the church, would provide places for speakers, and for musical instruments.

Friends and relatives of the Sisters and the graduates had been arriving on June 19 and 20, some to remain and others for the day, to inspect the grounds and buildings, and to visit with the Sisters. Reverend Eugene Brady, S.J., came the evening of the twentieth. His invitation to take an active part in the Jubilee was sent by special request of the graduates and former students. Many of them had made student retreats under his direction. They were happy to welcome him and to check with him the course of past and future years. He heard confessions that evening until nine-thirty o'clock. On Sunday, June 21, Father Brady said the six-thirty Mass in the temporary chapel in the Institute, during which a number received Holy Communion.

All High Masses were scheduled for the temporary chapel in Provi-

dence. The Jubilee opened at nine o'clock on the morning of Sunday, June 21, 1891. Reverend John B. Guéguen sang the High Mass, and the sermon was preached by Father Brady. He took as his theme the tercentenary of St. Aloysius, the celebration of which had been announced on the Jubilee invitations. The choice of topic was appropriate since one function of the day was the reunion of the Children of Mary. Sodalists, young and old, united to honor the patron of youth. In the afternoon at two o'clock, the speaker met interested students and guests in the Institute Study Hall which had always been the meeting place of the Sodality. He spoke with feeling on devotion to the Sacred Heart, a devotion which he had made his lifework.

On June 22, a Requiem Mass was offered for the repose of the souls of former teachers and pupils of the Institute by Reverend Michael McEvoy, O.F.M., of Terre Haute. A special thanksgiving and a memento were asked for Abbie *Ludes* Geis, one of the former pupils of 1883. She and her five-month-old son were visiting in Pennsylvania when they were carried away in the Johnstown Flood of May 31, 1889. The letter written to Miss Mary Pefferman by Mr. Geis brought the news that Abbie's remains had been recovered at last, but that the child's body was never found.¹⁵ Many of the former pupils knew Abbie and included her in their prayers when they visited the cemetery to pray for the departed.

Bishop Chatard arrived on the ten-eighteen train from Indianapolis, accompanied by the Right Reverend Bishop Joseph Rademacher, D.D., of Nashville, Tennessee, and Monsignor Bessonies. During the day, thirty priests came, some from Fort Wayne, and others from parishes and towns connected with the schools of the Sisters of Providence. Among them were Reverend Dr. J. J. McGovern, of Lockport, and Reverend Joseph F. Delaney, of Fort Wayne, representing Bishop Joseph Dwenger, gravely ill at that time. Others acted as officers of the Jubilee Mass on June 23.

Between times, Bishop Chatard came about two o'clock to the Institute, escorted by Sister Mary Albertine, directress of the Institute, to distribute awards and premiums to the diligent students. His Excellency was always profoundly interested in their work, and even though welcoming the clerical guests tended to fill up his day, he found time to greet the winners of the awards and give them his blessing.

All during the weekend, and especially on the twenty-second, the specially invited former pupils and graduates had been registering. By

the end of the day, seventy-two former pupils had come.¹⁶ The senior members of the group were Mrs. Persis *Holmes* Jones, 1842, and Mary *McManomy* Loeb, 1845, both students in Mother Theodore's time. The younger members were housed in the Institute, but the older graduates were welcomed and made at home in the new Providence. The entire second floor of the convent was put at their disposal. This was an added pleasure as an invitation to remain overnight in the convent was a rare occurrence. There was much to be seen and admired, and the guests did justice to everything. Again in the evening, the "grand illumination of Providence," of which they had read and heard, shone forth. The unusual display of electricity lighted up the rooms and dispelled the shadows outside. The cross on the tower high in the air formed a glittering galaxy of lights, adding new beauty to the summer night.

The Jubilee High Mass on June 23 was offered by Reverend John B. Guéguen, chaplain, happy at having been able to house the visiting bishops and clergy in his residence. The music of the Mass was Lambillotte's *Mass in D*. The Bishop presided, and many of the visiting clergy acted as officers of the Mass. Guests and clergy alike had looked forward to hearing the address of His Excellency Bishop Chatard, renowned for his eloquence. His theme, fittingly adapted to the occasion, had a truly spiritual message. At a time when women were content to exert a strong but subtle influence on society, the Bishop chose the words of St. Paul: "Let your lives be hid with Christ in God." Delicately and thoughtfully, he developed the beauty of a pure life of dedication to a family, or to work in God's service, and to His poor. He stressed the silent teaching of the text, emphasized particularly by the example of Mother Theodore's life. In commemorating the work of the two foundations, one of a religious motherhouse, and the other of a strong educational institution, the Bishop mentioned that Mother Theodore's life was indelibly engraved on the double jubilee. Her life and dedication were themes which the Bishop was always pleased to mention.

Mindful of the need of identifying the Church with the work of education, Bishop Chatard had cabled Rome for the Holy Father's blessing on the Jubilee. The return message, granting the blessing, was signed by Cardinal Rampolla, but the wording of the blessing did not arrive in time for public reading.¹⁷

A congratulatory letter came from Mère Marie-Julien, superior

general of the Sisters of Ruillé, voicing the love and prayers of the French Sisters in a union of prayer. In greeting all the participants of both jubilees, Mère Marie-Julien mentioned affectionately the two survivors of Mother Theodore's companions, Sister Mary Xavier and Sister Olympiade; also Sister Mary Theodore Le Touzé, Mother Theodore's niece, and Sister Mary Eudoxie Marshall who had spent some months at Ruillé before coming to enter at St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Moere Marie-Julien thanked God that the tree of the foundation, set firmly in its place by Mother Theodore and her successors in authority, had borne such abundant fruit.

The Alumnae Association Takes Form

On the afternoon of June 23, the schedule called for a program by the former pupils, and an informal meeting with Bishop Chatard. Some of these former pupils were brought into prominence by their appearance on the entertainment program, carefully prepared in advance. The guests for the next day's Commencement had also been invited to attend, and special places were arranged for all. Recalling a custom of earlier years, the ladies entered from the right, crossed the stage, saluting the Bishop and the Sisters, then seated themselves on the stage or in the audience. The participants in the program included Sally *McGaughey* Rand, Esther Ball, and Craigie *Gunn* Mitchell, who addressed the audience in a warm and dignified salutatory. Others, sucessfully presenting vocal and instrumental numbers, and serious essays suited to the occasion were: Anna *Weldon* Savage, Emma *Venneman* Crosson, Anna *Cabel* Wells, Clara Reis, May Trentman, Cora Davis, Carrie *Crim* Winstanley, Carrie *Caffeen* Tinkham, Mary *Williams* Tichenor, Lucia *Stunkard* Goodwin, Marguerite Wade, Catherine Tooey, Eldora *Miner* Raleigh, Clotilde *Pilard* Thomas, better known to later alumnae as Clotilde *Pilard* Keogh, and Frances Howe. After their program, during which the maturity and charm of the older women were manifest, the large group met informally with the Bishop. Suddenly they were aware that the allegiance they had always had toward their school had taken on a new form. No longer was it "my class," but a feeling of solidarity had taken over; not separate units any longer, but class spirit welded into an organization, held together by the bonds of affinity. Perhaps the very successful "Convent Girls' Bazaar," which had drawn them into a worthwhile project, had made



PROVIDENCE CONVENT BUILT IN 1890
"THE EDEN OF THE HEART"

them conscious of their power and leadership. These handsome women, many prominent in club and social work in their own environment, had come together to form an enduring association — the Alumnae Association of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

The first item to be settled upon was the instrument through which more regular communication could be effected. The product of their thought was a periodical, "The Signal," named from the little clicker, or attention-getter of their earlier days. The periodical ran for four years, from 1891 to 1895. A slight review of the events of the Jubilee was included in the first issue of September, 1891, but the chief emphasis was news about former pupils in various classes. Contributions for publication which were carefully done, also appeared. Even today, eighty-six years later, the essays make charming reading.

There was no contest during the Golden Jubilee Reunion, or even thereafter, for positions of importance. The officers were honored at being chosen. The duty of the presidency fell to Mrs. Clotilde Pilard Thomas, and the secretaryship to Miss Nane Head. Frances Howe, keenly interested in *The Signal*, accepted the editorship for three years. It was suggested that a Sister of Providence, an alumna, act as treasurer, but no name was mentioned at the time of the meeting. The suggestion was a wise one as an officer could be reached at the motherhouse under this plan, and cooperation be better secured. The development of this arrangement belongs to a later period. The Alumnae Association was emerging as a potentially strong organization, but its achievements will lie in a somewhat later span of years.

The program of the last day of the weekend, June 24, was concerned with Commencement. No one wished the graduates to be overshadowed on the day to which they had looked for so long. The six members of the Golden Jubilee Class were: the Misses Anna Breen, Frances Ragor, Maude O'Donnell, Mabel Dittemore; Pauline Goben, and Anna Clune. They received the applause of the assembled parents and friends at the very careful program they presented in true Saint Mary's style, deeply and thoughtfully prepared. "An Address to the Former Pupils," read by Miss Mary Pefferman, linked the past with the present jubilee. "The Angel's Record," a tribute to Mother Theodore, harmonized the two jubilees. Parents and friends were greatly pleased at the skill which combined essay and musical numbers without becoming too lengthy an entertainment.

At the conclusion, honors were bestowed on the graduates, and the

much-desired diplomas and laureate wreaths gave them the Institute's full accolade. Senator Daniel Turpie, senior senator from Indiana, was the Commencement speaker, but he confined himself to a short discourse in which he commented on the depth of the education given by the Sisters to the remarkable women who had passed through their hands, subtly complimenting the alumnae. The Golden Book of the Jubilee was distributed freely to clergy and guests.

Bishop Chatard then congratulated the graduates, and especially their parents, for their prudence in preparing their daughters for their future lives.

All too soon, the four days ended. The bishops and visiting clergy returned to their posts, the audience departed. The former students and graduates resumed the cares they had put down outside the main gate, and left, consoled and heartened by the happy days.

Saint Patrick's, Fort Wayne

Reverend Joseph F. Delaney, a guest at the Golden Jubilee Reunion, was very happy to learn that St. Patrick's parish, Fort Wayne, to which he had been appointed pastor the preceding year, would in September, 1891, become a separate school and convent of the Sisters of Providence. The children of this southside parish were too young to walk to Saint Augustine Academy, a distance of more than a mile. Until now, some of the Sisters residing at St. Augustine's had come to teach them since 1883. His building plan was in progress, and in 1891 a parochial school was being completed, and a house for the Sisters provided.

The Sisters appointed were: Sister Mary Catherine McGrath, superior, and Sisters Joseph Francis Fitzgerald, Mary Michael Byrne, Mary Cyrilla Cassidy, St. Rose Coffey, Mary Leontine Murphy, Felicitas Lavelle, and Mary Mercedes Pratt. The school numbered three hundred pupils and became self-supporting almost at once. Within ten years, an academy was built adjoining the convent; and in 1901, high school work was in full action. In naming the Academy, the pastor called to mind the memory of the late Sister Mary Catherine, the first superior, and called it Saint Catherine's Academy. Its successful history is identified with years still to come.

One of the young girls of the parish was Miss Mary Laughlin who entered the novitiate of the Sisters of Providence in 1905. As Mother Mary Bernard, she became the eighth superior-general of the Sisters of Providence, 1938-48.

Frenchtown, Indiana

Even though the preparations for the two jubilees required much time and attention, the promise to accept the mission of Frenchtown, Indiana, was not overlooked. Accepted at the request of Bishop Chatard, this school in St. Bernard parish, Harrison County, was begun on August 20, 1890. The Bishop requested that something be done for the poor people who needed religious instruction.¹⁹ They could not pay tuition or help the Sisters in any way other than an infrequent donation. Three Sisters were placed there each year in order to fulfill the canonical requirement for a religious house. The enrollment of children depended on the season, varying from forty to fifteen, if help were needed on the farms, or the weather made attendance impossible. This hamlet, too small to appear on the map of Indiana, still remains so, the nearest postoffice being DePauw, Indiana. As the pastor, Reverend Martin Andres, had charge of visiting other stations, the spiritual privations of the Sisters, coupled with the poor enrollment, was considered by Mother Mary Cleophas as a serious reason to ask for permission to withdraw from the mission. In 1899, after nine years of maintaining the Sisters in the little town, Mother applied to Right Reverend Bishop Denis O'Donaghue, who was administrator of the diocese during Bishop Chatard's illness and extensive absence. Bishop O'Donaghue gave the required permission on June 30, 1899.

The Sisters placed on the mission were able to speak either French or German as well as English, as different nationalities were represented in the small Catholic parish. Sister Mary de Pazzi Schurger, local superior, accompanied by Sisters Angela Hopkins and Mary Thecla Cocagne, opened the mission. These names appear quite often on the Obedience List during the nine years. God blessed the Sisters of Providence for their efforts to carry on an impossible labor. He sent them three postulants, the Colin sisters, aunts of Sister Cecilia Clare Bocard. They spent many years in the Community, well known by the names Sister Christina, Sister Mary Ange, and Sister St. Zita.

Dedication of the Church

At St. Mary's, normal routine began soon after the celebrations of the two jubilees were over. The next thing looked forward to was the dedication of the church and its opening for daily Mass and Community prayers. Soon the Community Room would cease to be the chapel, the

Sisters thought, but some time had to elapse before this would be effected.

On December 5, 1891, the convent bell summoned the Sisters to the new church for the erection of the Way of the Cross. This first use of the church did not require a preceding dedication of the building. Bishop Chatard had appointed Reverend Michael McEvoy, O.F.M., to erect the Stations. Father Guéguen and two acolytes assisted him. The Stations, being in heavy bas-relief, had been placed in their respective locations earlier. The crosses were on a table ready to be affixed to each Station. Sprinkling them with holy water and incensing them followed, the choir meanwhile singing the *Vexilla Regis*. The crosses were inserted in the top of each station, and the Way of the Cross solemnly read by Father McEvoy.

The feast of the Immaculate Conception was selected for the dedication, happily combining the great feast and the conferring of the Habit. The Bishop arrived the evening before, and on the morning of the appointed day, said early Mass for the Sisters in the Community Room Chapel. At eight-thirty in the morning, December 8, 1891, the dedication of the church took place. No one is ever permitted to be present at the actual dedication except the Bishop and the ministering clergy²⁰. The Sisters remained in the chapel in Providence, but came to the church after the dedication. A Solemn High Mass was then sung by Father Guéguen, assisted by Reverend Michael McEvoy, O.F.M., Reverend Hugh M. Finnegan, S.J., and Reverend August Riehle. The Bishop then conferred the Habit on nine postulants.

On Saturday, December 12, lumber was hauled in for the new floor of the church. Sunday was a peaceful day, the first Sunday that the Sisters had the church to themselves. The next day, the chairs were taken out in order that the wooden floor could be laid. The Blessed Sacrament was removed to the Community Room Chapel for a few days until the work was finished.

Rearrangements and New Events

On December 22, the Stations had to be taken down, re-erected, and the line of the Stations changed from left to right.²¹ The misplacing of the second Station caused the disorder. Father McEvoy then blessed the "old" Stations which had been saved from Mother Mary Cecilia's chapel at the time of the fire. Placed in the reclusum after the cere-

mony, they remained there until July, 1958, when much darkened by the passage of years, they were replaced by Stations having illustrations in a style similar to the former ones.

Christmas must have been a peaceful and happy time. So much had been accomplished, and for a time at least, the Sisters could enjoy the holy season with its spiritual renewal. Christmas Day had no Midnight Mass to usher it in. Five o'clock Mass was later followed by the High Mass at nine o'clock, and the customary greetings. The diarist remarks on her record that day that it was not like other Christmas celebrations. So much still would have to be done to make both the church and Providence become homelike. The church seemed too big, but that vastness would be absorbed quickly enough in the summer.

A day of unusual happenings occurred during Holy Week, April 10 to 17, 1891. Instead of a sermon at High Mass on Palm Sunday, the Passion of the Lord was read in Latin by Father Guéguen, and simultaneously in English by Reverend J. Effinger, S.J. This was the first occasion in the history of the Community that this had been done.²² The students' retreat conducted in Holy Week by Father Effinger, was another "first time" in our history.

The Catholic Educational Exhibit at the World's Fair, 1893

The Special Exhibits in the World's Fair were under the direction of civic and educational committees, but the Catholic Educational Committee was able to proceed harmoniously with all the secular and public committees. The Liberal Arts Building was under the control of Dr. Selim H. Peabody; arrangements were to be adjusted through him, and were done so very well.

All administrators or supervisors of Catholic schools were aware that much was expected of them in demonstrating the value of Catholic education. At the meeting of Archbishops in Boston in July, 1890, a committee, consisting of Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishops Feehan, Ireland, Riordan, and Bishop Spalding, was appointed to attend to the preliminaries. A large Board of Directors representing every diocese in the United States, made up of archbishops, bishops, priests, members of religious orders, and prominent Catholic laymen, was drawn up. The Board elected Right Reverend John Lancaster Spalding of Peoria, as President, and Brother Maurelian of the Christian Brothers, as Secretary and General Manager of the Catholic Exhibits.²³ Brother

Maurelian's duty was a very heavy one. He had to circularize all the institutions, acquaint the persons in charge as to plans, and fit all of them into the general plan. On May 23, 1892, Brother Maurelian came to St. Mary's to see Sister Basilissa and inquire about the exhibits from the Sisters of Providence. Sister was not at home at the time, but saw him later in Chicago.

The Liberal Arts Building, built for the express purpose of displaying the type and means of education in American schools was huge. It was the largest building under roof in the world at that time. In the endeavor to do justice to the educators, the manager, Dr. Peabody, had planned the building with rooms large enough to contain and display the exhibits from all institutions, public and private. The Sisters of Providence had secured Booth 65 on the second floor, and also another booth, number 40, in the U. S. Historical Annex.

A certain similarity of arrangement was necessary in all cases, but there was some crowding. The work of all children in all grades was to be bound in a volume for each grade. Even the directors of the Exhibit were amazed at the amount of material sent in. Space was available on the walls for photographs, pictures of buildings, banners, paintings, and on the tables for the display of volumes.

Too wide a field would have to be ranged over to explain the modest offerings of the Sisters of Providence, forty-five in all. Saint Mary's Institute presented seventeen bound volumes showing a definite plan of instruction based on clearness and practicality. The special subjects in which it portrayed excellence were in the teaching of religion, music, art, natural science, and philosophy. The thirty-three parochial schools, ten high schools, two orphanages, all exhibited the results of careful work. St. John's Academy, Indianapolis, presented in ten volumes, a surprising combination of practical work in commercial subjects, and also studies in American Literature, history; charts and explanations of points in logic, ethics, and philosophy. Every high school presented three or four volumes of work, and the work of the parochial school children showed the steady advance of their development in the mastery of subjects, particularly in excellent penmanship, drawing, and needlework.

The Exhibit opened on May 1, 1893, and closed on October 30 of the same year. Its effect was constructive and heartening to all who labored to produce the Catholic demonstration. The cumulative impression was stupendous, one might say, and the very unusual exhibits spoke for

the excellence of the work in Catholic schools. Exhibit Director-General Davis called the Catholic Education Exhibit one of the marked successes of the Exposition, and Dr. Selim H. Peabody, chief of the Liberal Arts Exhibits said, "Without flattery, I can honestly say that the Exhibit was the gem of my department."²⁴

One practical question arises: How was the Educational Exhibit funded? At first, there was no reserve fund to call upon. However, with the authorization of the Committee of Archbishops, contributions were solicited from well-disposed wealthy Catholics, and collections were announced in each diocese and parish. Religious communities bore the expense of sending the exhibits and of reclaiming them. The installation of them, and the expense of labor involved, were taken care of by Brother Maurelian's committee. All in all, the Directors of the Catholic Exhibits met expenses, and rejoiced in the worldwide approbation given to the Catholic Educational Exhibits at the World's Columbian Exposition. Brother Maurelian's thoroughly itemized report shows in its summary:²⁵

Total Receipts for the Catholic Educational Exhibit	\$39,248.87
Total Expenses	38,956.72
Balance on hand	\$ 292.15

These amounts translated into the value of money today would be prodigious.

Death of Reverend John B. Guéguen

This era should not close without mention of the faithful chaplain, Reverend John B. Guéguen, who spent fourteen years at St. Mary's. Father Guéguen's name has appeared regularly as officiating in the functions that involved him as a constant adviser and consultant in the affairs of the Sisters of Providence. But the day came when the veteran missionary succumbed on December 16, 1893, worn out by his constant fidelity. His circle of friends among the priests was very wide through his association with the seminaries. To the people of the Vincennes diocese, he was well known because of his services in different parishes. One hundred and seven priests were invited to his funeral, and many of them came. Bishop Chatard pontificated at the funeral, and a magnificent chorus of male voices sang the Office of the Dead and the Requiem Mass. Eight priests, directed by Patrick J. Ryan, the undertaker,²⁶ bore the coffin to its last resting place near the

graves of the other two chaplains from Brittany, Fathers Corbe and Chassé. Like those of its confreres, the sturdy Breton heart found its memory perpetuated on the headstone, and deeply in the hearts of the Sisters.

Convenient Changes in the Grounds

On May 21, 1894, the old wooden bridge spanning the ravine south of the church was torn down, and a new stone bridge was to be built by the Ittenbach Company according to the architect's plans. Mr. Ittenbach was charged to have it finished in time for Commencement. It was completed even to the asphalt flooring by July 1, and remains an elegant structure to the present day (1977).

Other ventures had been spoken of in the first issues of *The Signal*, an Alumnae Hall, for instance, mentioned by Frances Howe. This was only a lovely dream. Financing such a project was an impossibility to young women at that time. More and more visitors came to St. Mary's, and the old Visitors' Home, on the site of the present Guerin Hall, although kept repaired and remodeled, was not adequate for their accommodation. On June 11, 1894, Mr. Oscar Bohlen completed the staking off of the ground for the new hotel on the east side of the main avenue, its present location. Messrs. Jungclaus and Schumaker, under Mr. Bohlen's direction, erected the building which was ready for occupancy by December 7, 1894. Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Peele were the managers.

Later, a bridal party stopped at the hotel.²⁷ Mother Mary Cleophas asked the young couple to name the hotel. They selected the name "Woodland Inn," which was very acceptable. The young couple, sister and brother-in-law of Reverend Joseph A. Byrne, were Mr. and Mrs. Flaherty. Father Byrne, following a few temporary chaplains, had been appointed chaplain at St. Mary's from 1894 to 1896.

The present volume of the History of the Sisters of Providence ends with a tribute to the second of the two Bishops of the diocese who cared for the Community following the death of Mother Theodore. The devotion and loyalty of the noble and courageous Right Reverend Bishop Maurice de Saint-Palais has been recognized and indicated on each occasion in which he has supported the Sisters in their trials. His successor, the Right Reverend Francis Silas Chatard, was equally devoted and helpful to the Sisters with his strong emphasis on

Americanization of the growing Community. His influence in Rome helped to change the Sisters of Providence from diocesan status to full recognition as a Pontifical Institute. The Decree of Final Approval of the Rule was granted on March 12, 1894. Bishop Chatard arrived in Rome on April 1, 1894, and was pleased to hear the good news. His letter of April 9, 1894, from Rome to Mother Mary Cleophas ordered a solemn Benediction service to be held in thanksgiving for the long-desired favor.

The Sisters of Providence owe much to Bishop Chatard for his careful guidance of the Community during the time of probation and for his generous respect for the self-governing status fully approved by Rome. His foresight and knowledge of modern trends and methods in education, as well as his willingness to approve new ventures, provided more fertile soil in which to nourish academic excellence, a quality for which the schools of the Sisters of Providence were noted. We end this narrative by expressing gratitude for his care, a care which was to continue until 1918. The senior Sisters of today venerate his memory and thank God for having sent them in their youth a good shepherd.

NOTES — CHAPTER XXIV

1. Rev. Michael J. Scanlan, *An Historical Sketch of the Parish of St. Rose, Chelsea*, Mass. (Privately printed, 1924), p. 13.
2. Rev. James McGlew to Mother Euphrasie, June 6, 1888. S.M.W.A.
3. *Ibid.*
4. Book of the Foundations, "Chelsea," p. 60.
5. Correspondence in Chelsea file, Secretary's Office, S.M.W.A.
6. Rev. James McGlew to Mother Mary Cleophas, March 24, 1891. Chelsea file.
7. Rev. John J. Doyle, "Detroit's 'Call to Action' was not the First" (Indianapolis: *Criterion*, November 19, 1976), p. 1.
8. Rev. Cornelius J. Kirkfleet, O. Praem., *The Life of Patrick Augustine Feehan* (Chicago: Matre and Company, 1922), p. 258.
9. Rev. Menceslaus J. Madaj, "The First Archbishop of Chicago," *New World* (Chicago: New World Publishing Company, Aug. 16, 1974), p. 7.
10. Minutes of the Summer School of Sisters of Providence, 1890. S.M.W.A.
11. Introductory Chapter of the *Teacher's Guide*.
12. *The Catholic Record*, Indianapolis, Indiana, August 22, 1890.
13. *Ibid.*
14. Community Diary, June 12, 1891.
15. Community Diary, June 3, 1890, records letter read to the Sisters of Providence, and later announced by Miss Pefferman to Commencement guests, June 22, 1891.

16. Community Diary, June 22, 1891.
17. *Ibid.*, June 26, 1891.
18. Book of the Foundations, "St. Patrick's, Fort Wayne," p. 64.
19. *Ibid.*, "Frenchtown," p. 63.
20. Community Diary, December 8, 1891.
21. *Ibid.*, December 22, 1891.
22. *Ibid.*, April 10, 1892.
23. *History of the Catholic Educational Exhibit: World's Fair Columbian Exposition, 1893*, p. 5.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 255.
25. *Ibid.*, "Final Report," p. 254.
26. This is the first time Mr. Ryan's name as undertaker appears in the Community Diary, December 16, 1893. Dr. Willien prepared Bishop de Saint-Palais' remains for burial on June 28, 1877.
27. Community Diary, October 10, 1896.

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